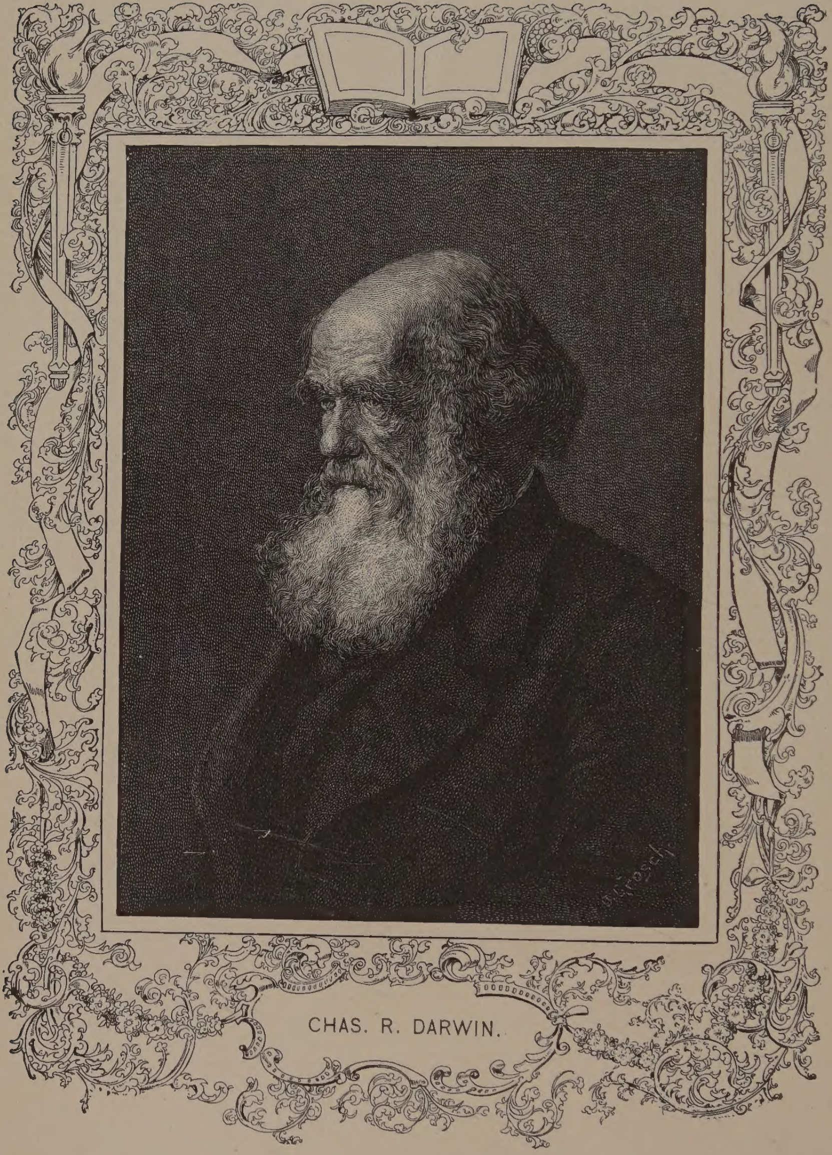

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FELIX DAHN

(1834-)

Felix Dahn was born at Hamburg, February 9th, 1834, but when he was only six weeks old the family removed to Munich. His parents, Friedrich and Constance Dahn, were celebrated actors, and members of the Royal Theatre at Munich. His childhood, youth, and early manhood were passed in Munich, with the exception of one year (1852-3) spent at the University of Berlin. A somewhat lonely but not unhappy childhood in the fine old house in the Königinstrasse, with its surroundings of parks and pleasant gardens, developed his dreamy, poetic instincts. His first poem, written at the age of fourteen, is the spontaneous lyric outburst of a boy's joy in nature.

Felix Dahn

Dahn was educated at the Latin school and the University of Munich. He was but a lad when Homer opened to him a new world. He began to read the Iliad, and scarcely left off night or day until it was finished. The Odyssey followed in the same way; and in two months he had read them both and begun again at the beginning. Poetry had rendered his mind susceptible to learning, and he read, in school and out, every classic that fell into his hands. History as well as poetry early became a passion to him, and the uniformity of his intellectual development made every province of learning his own. The Teutonic languages, old and new, Anglo-Saxon, Gothic, Norse, etc., as well as Latin, Greek, French, Italian, Spanish, and English, were easily assimilated. At the university, both at Munich and Berlin, he devoted himself to history, philosophy, and jurisprudence. In 1857 he became docent in the faculty of law at the University of Munich, and in 1862 was made professor. In the following year he was appointed professor of German law and jurisprudence at Würzburg, and in 1872 he was called to Königsberg to the same chair, and in 1888 to Breslau. He took part in the war of 1870-71, and was present at the battle of Sedan.

Dahn is distinguished as a historian, novelist, poet, and dramatist. His principal historical works are—'Die Könige der Germanen'

(The Kings of the Germans), 1861–72, 6 vols.; ‹Urgeschichte der Germanischen und Romanischen Völker› (Primitive History of the Germanic and Romance Peoples), 1878. These two rank high among the contributions to German history and ethnology in the nineteenth century. Among his most prominent works in law is ‹Die Vernunft im Recht› (Reason in Law), 1879. As a poet and dramatist, several of his performances have attained eminence. In 1857 he published his first collection of poems, and a second collection followed in 1873. ‹Zwölf Balladen› (Twelve Ballads) appeared in 1875, and ‹Balladen und Lieder› (Ballads and Songs) in 1878. By far his greatest romance is ‹Der Kampf um Rom› (The Struggle for Rome), 1876, a work of pre-eminent power and merit. It is a voluminous study, a series of elaborate pictures, dealing with the empires of the East and the West in the sixth century. Its scenes are chiefly laid in Ravenna, at the time of that city's great splendor under the Gothic sovereignty, and at Rome. The fierce and beautiful Amalaswintha (also called often Amalasonta) is a prominent character; and other vivid types are Cassiodorus, Totila, and Mataswintha. Following this novel, among others, appeared in 1878 ‹Kämpfende Herzen› (Struggling Hearts); in 1880, ‹Odhins Trost› (Odin's Consolation); and in 1882–90 a series of historical novels under the common title ‹Kleine Romane aus der Völkerwanderung› (Short Novels from the Wandering of the Nations), from the first of which, ‹Felicitas,› an appended extract is taken.

Among his dramas are ‹Markgraf Rüdeger von Bechelaren›; ‹König Roderich›; and ‹Deutsche Treue› (German Fidelity).

THE YOUNG WIFE

From ‹Felicitas›: copyrighted by George S. Gottsberger, 1883. Reprinted by permission of George G. Peck

It was a beautiful June evening. The sun, setting in golden radiance, cast its glittering rays from the west, from Vindelicia, upon the Hill of Mercury and the modest villa crowning it.

Only a subdued murmur reached this spot from the highway, along which ever and anon a two-wheeled cart, drawn by Norican oxen, was moving homeward from the western gate of Juvavum,—the *porta Vindelica*,—as were also the country people who had been selling vegetables, hens, and doves in the Forum of Hercules during the day just ended.

So it was quiet and peaceful on the hill; beyond the stone wall, which was lower than the height of a man, and which inclosed the garden, nothing was heard save the rippling of the little rivulet which, after leaving its marble basin at its source, fed the fountain, and then wound in graceful curves through the carefully kept garden, and finally near the entrance, which was surmounted by Hermes but destitute of door or grating, passed under a gap in the wall and flowed down the hill in a stone channel.

At the foot of this hill, towards the southeast, in the direction of the city, lay carefully tilled vegetable gardens and orchards, luxuriant green meadows, and fields of spelt, a grain brought by the Romans to the land of the barbarians.

Behind the villa, on the ascending hillside, towered and rustled a beautiful grove of beeches, from whose depths echoed the metallic notes of the yellow thrush.

The scene was so beautiful, so peaceful; only in the west and the southeast could a dark cloud be seen.

From the open gateway a straight path, strewn with white sand, led through the spacious garden, and was bordered with lofty evergreen oaks and clumps of yew-trees; the latter, according to a long prevailing fashion, clipped into all sorts of geometrical figures,—a token of taste, or the lack of it, the Rococo age did not invent, but merely borrowed from the gardens of the emperors.

Statues stood at regular distances along the way from the gate to the entrance of the dwelling; nymphs, a Flora, a Silvanus, a Mercury,—poor specimens of work executed in plaster; fat Crispus manufactured them by the dozen in his workshop on the square of Vulcanus at Juvavum, and sold them cheap; times were hard for men, and still worse for gods and demigods, but these were a free gift. Crispus was brother to the father of the young master of the house.

From the garden gate sounded a few hammer-strokes, echoed back from the stone wall of the inclosure; they were light taps, for they were cautiously guided by an artist's hand, apparently the last finishing touches of a master.

The man who wielded the hammer now started up—he had been kneeling behind the gate, beside which, piled one above another, a dozen unhewn marble slabs announced the dwelling of a stone-cutter. Thrusting the little hammer into the belt that fastened the leather apron over the blue tunic, he poured from a small flask a few drops of oil on a woolen cloth, and carefully rubbed the inscription upon the marble with it until it was as smooth as a mirror; then turning his head a little on one side, like a bird that wants to examine something closely, with an approving nod he read aloud the words on the slab:—

«Hic habitat Felicitas.
Nihil mali intret.»

«Yes, yes! Here dwells happiness: *my* happiness, *our* happiness — so long as my Felicitas lives here, happy herself and making others happy. May misfortune never cross this threshold! may every demon of ill be banished by this motto! The house has now received a beautiful finish in these words. But where is she? She must see it and praise me. Felicitas,» he called, turning towards the house, «come here!»

Wiping the perspiration from his brow, he stood erect — a pliant youthful figure of middle height, not unlike the Mercury in the garden, modeled by Crispus according to the ancient traditions of symmetry; dark-brown hair, cut short, curled closely, almost like a cap, over his uncovered round head; a pair of dark eyes, shaded by heavy brows, laughed merrily out into the world; his bare feet and arms were beautifully formed, but showed little strength,— it was only in the right arm that the muscles stood forth prominently; the brown leather apron was white with scrapings from the marble. He shook off the dust and called again in a louder tone, «Felicitas!»

A white figure, framed like a picture between the two pilasters of the entrance, appeared on the threshold, pushing back the dark yellow curtain suspended from a bronze pole by movable rings. A very young girl — or was it a young wife? Yes, this child, scarcely seventeen, must have already become a wife, for she was undoubtedly the mother of the infant she pressed to her bosom with her left arm; no one but a mother holds a child with such an expression in face and attitude.

The young wife pressed two fingers of her right hand, with the palm turned outward, warningly to her lips. «Hush,» she said; «our child is asleep.»

And now the slender figure, not yet wholly matured, floated down the four stone steps leading from the threshold to the garden, carefully lifting the child a little higher and holding it still more closely with her left arm, while her right hand raised her snowy robe to the dainty ankle; the faultlessly beautiful oval head was slightly bent forward: it was a vision of perfect grace, even more youthful, more childlike than Raphael's Madonnas, and not humble, yet at the same time mystically transfigured, like the mother of the Christ-child; there was nothing complicated, nothing miraculous, naught save the noblest simplicity blended with royal grandeur in Felicitas's unconscious innocence and dignity. The movements of this Hebe who had become a mother were as measured and graceful as a perfect musical harmony. A wife, yet still a maiden; purely human, perfectly happy, absorbed and satisfied by her love for her young husband and the child at her breast; so chaste in coloring was the perfect beauty of her form and face that every profane desire vanished in her presence as though she were a statue.

She wore no ornaments; her light-brown hair, gleaming with a gold tinge where the sun kissed it, was drawn back in natural waves from the beautiful temples, revealing the low forehead, and was fastened in a loose knot at the nape of the neck; a milk-white robe of the finest wool, fastened on the left shoulder by an exquisitely shaped but plain silver clasp, fell in flowing folds around her figure,— revealing the neck, the upper part of the swelling bosom, and the still childish arms which seemed a little too long,— and reached to the ankles, just touching the dainty scarlet leather sandals; beneath the breast one end of the robe was drawn through a bronze girdle a hand's-breadth wide.

So she glided noiselessly as a wave down the steps and up to her husband. The narrow oval face possessed the marvelous, almost bluish, white tint peculiar to the daughters of Ionia, which no Southern noonday sun can brown; the semi-circular eyebrows, as regular as if marked by a pair of compasses, might have given the countenance a lifeless, almost statuesque expression, had not under the long low-curling lashes the dark-brown antelope eyes shone with the most vivid animation as she fixed them on her beloved husband.

The latter rushed towards her with elastic steps; carefully and tenderly taking the sleeping child from her arm, he laid it under the shade of a rose-bush in the oval shallow straw lid of his work-basket; one full-blown rose waving in the evening breeze tossed fragrant petals on the little one, who smiled in sleep.

The master of the house, throwing his arm around his young wife's almost too slender waist, led her to the slab just completed for the threshold of the entrance, saying:—

«The motto I have kept secret—which I have worked so hard to finish—is now done; read it, and know, and feel»—here he tenderly kissed her lips—«you—you yourself are the happiness; *you* dwell here.»

Translation of Mary J. Safford.

THE VENGEANCE OF GOTHELINDIS

From ‹The Struggle for Rome›

The slave silently opened a door in the marble walls. Amalaswintha entered, and stood in the narrow gallery which ran around the basin. Just in front, low steps led into the magnificent bath, from which already warm delicious odors were rising. Light fell in from above through an octagonal dome of finely cut glass. At the entrance was a flight of steps of cedar wood, which led up twelve stairs to a spring-board. Round about the marble walls of the gallery, as well as of the basin, countless friezes hid the mouths of the pipes needed for the water-works and the hot air.

Silently the bath-woman spread the bathing accessories over the soft cushions and carpets that covered the floor of the gallery, and turned toward the door.

«Why is it that I feel that I know you?» asked the princess, looking at her thoughtfully. «How long have you been here?»

«Since eight days.» And she took hold of the door.

«How long have you served Cassiodorus?»

«I have always served the Princess Gothelindis.»

With a cry of terror Amalaswintha started up at this name. She turned and grasped at the garment of the woman—too late! She was gone, the door fell to. Amalaswintha heard the key drawn out of the lock.

In vain her eye sought for another place of exit. Then an immense unnamable fear overcame the queen. She felt that she had been terribly deceived, that here was hidden a disastrous secret. Fear, nameless fear, fell upon her. Flight, flight out of this chamber was her one thought.

But flight seemed impossible; the door from this side was now only a thick marble slab, like those at the right and the left. Not even a pin could penetrate through the seams. In despair her eyes traveled around the wall of the gallery. Only the tritons and dolphins stared back at her. At last her gaze rested on the snake-enwreathed head of the Medusa just opposite, and she uttered a cry of terror. The face of the Medusa was pushed aside, and the oval space under the snaky hair was filled by a human countenance!

Was it a human countenance?

Trembling, she clutched the marble railing, and leaning far forward peered over: yes, those were the features of Gothelindis, drawn to a grimace; and a hell of hatred and scorn flamed in her eyes.

Amalaswintha sank on her knees and hid her face.

«You—you here!»

Hoarse laughter answered her.

«Yes, Amelung woman! I am here, and to your ruin! This island, this house, is mine! It shall be your grave! Dolios and all slaves of Cassiodorus are mine, sold to me a week ago. I have lured you hither. I have followed you as your shadow. Through long days and long nights I have borne within me burning hatred, at length to taste here full revenge. For hours I will enjoy your mortal agony, will witness miserable, moaning terror shake as in fever that proud body and cover that haughty face!—Oh, I will drink a sea of revenge!»

Amalaswintha rose, wringing her hands:—«Revenge, Gothelindis! Wherefore? Whence this deadly hatred of me?»

«Ha, and you ask? To be sure, decades have passed by, and the heart of the happy soon forgets. But hatred has a more faithful memory. Have you forgotten how once upon a time two young girls played beneath the plantains on the meadows of Ravenna? Both were chief among their playmates. Both were young, beautiful, and charming; the one daughter of a king, the other daughter of the Baltha. And the girls had to choose a queen for their games: and they chose Gothelindis, for she was yet more beautiful than you, and not as imperious; and they chose her once, twice in succession. But the daughter of the king stood by, consumed by wild untamable pride,—pride and envy; and when they chose me for the third time, she took up the sharp-pointed garden scissors—»

«Stop! oh, hush, Gothelindis!»

«—And flung it at me. And it hit its mark, and crying out and bloody I fell to the ground, my whole cheek a gaping wound, and my eye, my eye pierced. Ah, how that hurts, even now!»

«Pardon, forgive, Gothelindis!» moaned the prisoner. «You had forgiven me long ago.»

«Forgiven? I forgive you? That you robbed my face of its eye, and my life of its beauty, shall I forgive that? You had got the better of me for life; Gothelindis was no longer dangerous; she mourned in silence, the disfigured one fled the eyes of men. And years passed. Then out of Spain came to the court of Ravenna the noble Eutharich, the Amaler with the dark eye and the tender heart: he, ill himself, took pity on the ill, half-blind one; and he talked with her kindly and compassionately, with the ugly one, whom all else avoided. Oh, how that refreshened my thirsting soul! And it was decided in order to bury the old hatred between the two houses, to wipe away old and recent guilt,—for the Duke of the Baltha, Alarich, had likewise been executed on secret, unproved accusation,—that the poor maltreated daughter of the Baltha should become the wife of the noblest of the Amaler. When you heard that, you who had disfigured me! you decided to take my lover from me—not from jealousy, not because you loved him! no, from pride; because you wanted as your own the chief man in the Gothic Kingdom, the next male heir to the crown. You decided on that, and you achieved it. Your father could not deny you any wish; and Eutharich forgot at once his pity for the one-eyed one, as soon as the hand of the beautiful daughter of the king beckoned to him. For compensation—or was it for scorn?—they gave to me likewise an Amaler—Theodahad, the miserable coward!»

«Gothelindis, I swear to you, I never imagined that you loved Eutharich! How could I—»

«To be sure, how could you think that the ugly one would lift her thoughts so high? Oh, you cursed one! And if you *had* loved him, and had made him happy—I would have forgiven you everything. But you did not love him, you can love only the sceptre! You made him miserable. For years I saw him at your side, bowed down, unloved, frozen to the marrow by your coldness. Sorrow because of your chilling pride soon killed him! You, you have robbed me of my lover, and sent him to the grave! Revenge, revenge for him!»

And the deep vault re-echoed the cry, «Revenge! Revenge!»

«Help, ho!» cried Amalaswintha. She ran in despair along the circle of the gallery, beating her hands against the marble slab.

«Yes, cry out! No one hears you now but the god of vengeance. Do you think that for months I have curbed in my hatred in vain? How often, how easily, could I even in Ravenna have reached you with poniard or poison! But no, I have lured you hither. At the petition of my cousins, at your bed an hour ago I restrained my uplifted arm from the stroke. Yes, for you shall die slowly, inch by inch! for hours I will watch your mortal agony increase.»

«Terrible one!»

«Oh, what are hours, compared to the decades through which you have tortured me with my disfigurement, with your beauty, with the possession of my lover? What are hours compared to decades? But you shall pay for it.»

«What will you do?» cried the tortured one, again and again looking for an escape along the walls.

«Do? I will drown you, slowly, slowly—in the water-works of this bath—which your friend Cassiodorus built! You do not know the pangs of jealousy and impotent fury I have suffered in this house, when you shared the couch with Eutharich, and I was among your followers and obliged to serve you. In this bath, you haughty one, I have loosened your sandals and dried the proud limbs. In this bath you shall die.»

Gothelindis pressed a button. The floor of the basin of the upper story, the circular metal plate, divided into two semicircles. They disappeared to the right and left in the wall; the prisoner in terror looked from the narrow gallery into the abysmal depth at her feet.

«Remember my eye!» cried Gothelindis, and then of a sudden the sluices at the bottom opened and the waters of the lake rushed in, gurgling and foaming, and rose higher and higher with terrible swiftness.

Amalaswintha saw certain death before her. She knew the impossibility of escaping, or of softening with prayers her devilish enemy. But her old proud Amelung courage returned; composedly she awaited her fate. Near her, to the right of the entrance, she saw among the many friezes of Greek mythology a representation of the death of Christ; that refreshed her soul. She knelt down before the marble crucifix, clasped it with both hands and prayed calmly with closed eyes, while the waters rose and rose. Now they dashed against the steps of the gallery.

«You are going to pray, are you, murderess?» cried Gothelindis furiously. «Away from the crucifix! Remember the three dukes!»

Of a sudden all the dolphins and tritons on the right side of the octagon began to spout streams of hot water; white smoke puffed out of the pipes.

Amalaswintha sprang up and rushed to the other side of the gallery. «Gothelindis, I forgive you! Kill me, but do you likewise forgive my soul.»

And the water rose and rose. Already it surged over the upper step and pushed slowly on to the floor of the gallery.

«I forgive you? Never! Think of Eutharich!» And from the left the boiling streams of water hissed toward Amalaswintha. She now fled toward the center, just opposite the head of the Medusa, the only place where no stream from the pipes could reach her.

If she mounted the springboard placed here, she could for a little yet prolong her life. Gothelindis seemed to expect this, in order to enjoy the prolonged agony. The water already foamed on the marble floor of the gallery and moistened the feet of the prisoner. Quickly she bounded up the brown shimmering steps, and leaned against the railing of the bridge.

«Hear me, Gothelindis! my last prayer! not for myself,—for my people, for our people. Petros intends to despoil it and Theodahad.»

«Yes, I know, this realm is the uppermost care of your soul! Despair! It is lost! These foolish Goths, who for centuries preferred the Amaler to the Baltha, are sold and betrayed by the house of the Amaler. Belisarius draws near, and there is none to warn them.»

«You are mistaken, fiend! They *are* warned. I their queen have warned them. Hail to my people! Ruin to its enemies and mercy to my soul!» And with a quick leap she threw herself from the platform into the waters. Foaming they closed over her.

Gothelindis stared at the place where her victim had stood.

«She has disappeared,» she said.

Then she looked down into the water; the kerchief of Amalaswintha was swimming on the surface.

«Even in death this woman triumphs over me,» she said slowly. «How long lasted the hatred! and how short was revenge!»

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by R. H. Knorr.

OLOF VON DALIN

(1708–1763)

BY WILLIAM H. CARPENTER

OLOF VON DALIN, «the father of modern Swedish poetry,» was born at Vinberga, in Halland, Sweden, August 29th, 1708. He was one of the most important figures in Swedish literature during a transitional period, which in consequence of the influence he exercised has been called the «Dalin age.» He was the son of a clergyman, and studied at the University of Lund, where under the instruction of Rydelius he particularly devoted himself to French and English literature. At the age of twenty he went to Stockholm in the capacity of tutor, and in 1731 he entered the government service.

His talents, brilliancy, and adaptability made him a universal favorite, and his career was singularly unobstructed. He was the embodiment of the vital new spirit which flashed upon the dullness of the time, breaking up formalism and dead tradition and introducing into literature an element which was destined to transform it.

In 1732 there appeared in Stockholm a weekly paper, edited anonymously, devoted to literary topics and to the discussion of the questions of the day. The publication of this little sheet was the immediate result of Dalin's English proclivities. His studies in English literature had formed his mind upon a new model, and the Svenska Argus (1732–1734) was the Swedish counterpart of the English Spectator and a direct imitation of the example of Addison. The appearance of the Argus was a revelation. The public, accustomed to the monotonous dullness of its predecessors, was taken by storm by the wit, piquancy, and verve of the new periodical. Its first issue already relegated such publications as the Sedolärande Mercurius, itself only two years older, to the limbo of things outgrown. The paper at once attained universal popularity; and when the identity of the young editor became known he was acclaimed as the foremost writer of the land, and was overwhelmed with favors from every side.

His next work was 'Tankar om Kritiker' (Thoughts about Criticisms), and the dramas 'Den Afundsjuke' (The Jealous Man), a comedy in imitation of Holberg, and 'Brynhild,' a tragedy. Returning from a tour, he created great enthusiasm by his 'Saga om Hästen' (The Story of the Horse), 1739; a witty prose narrative, in which, in the character of a horse, he related in a highly humorous manner the history of Sweden. This was followed by the satire, strongly suggestive of Swift, 'Aprilverk om vår Herrliga Tid' (April-work of Our Glorious Time), a piece of writing which delighted the public. In 1742 appeared what was regarded by his contemporaries as the attainment of his highest poetic efforts, 'Svenska Friheten' (Swedish Freedom), a didactic allegorical poem.

Dalin was ennobled in 1751, and the youthful Queen of Sweden, Louise Ulrika, sister of Frederick the Great, appointed him to the double office of tutoring the young crown prince Gustav and writing a complete history of Sweden. These compulsory duties, and the frequent «festal» poems which in his capacity as court poet it devolved upon him to write, robbed him of the leisure to attempt any sustained effort; and from this time, aside from his History, the only products of his pen are «occasional» poems, of which a large number have been preserved.

Dalin was the chief founder of the «Vitterhets-Akademie» (Academy of Arts and Sciences), established by Queen Louise Ulrika in 1753, which in 1786, under Gustav III., was transformed into the «Vitterhets-, Historie-, och Antiquitäts-Akademie.» He was appointed privy councilor in 1753, and subsequently being suspected of revolutionary intrigues, he was banished from the court. He returned in 1761. During the period of the exile he worked upon his 'Svearikes Historia' (History of the Kingdom of Sweden), which he ultimately brought down to the period of Charles IX. This appeared in four volumes, 1747–62. His collected works were published in 1767. He died at Drottningholm, August 12th, 1763.

The immense influence of Dalin upon his age was disproportionate to the merits of his writings, and must be ascribed to his personality and to the new elements which he introduced, rather than to his creative genius. He was the force which opened new channels, the power which directed the new tendencies of his day. He broke away from the traditions of the German cult, which until his time had been the ruling power, and brought into Swedish the potent elements of French and English literature. Together with Madame Nordenflycht and other followers of his school, and aided by the French influence of the court, he completely transformed the character of the national literature.

Wm H. Carpenter.

FROM THE SWEDISH ARGUS, NO. XIII.—1733

Cupias non placuisse nimis

I HOPE you know me now, my reader, so that you will pardon me if I write but little, since that happens merely in order that I may set down the truth. I too am not my own master; for my offspring have now taken it upon themselves to shut off their speakers with that blow which makes for a creditable piece of writing, but afflicts the truth. In which respect I for the most resemble the fifth wheel of a wagon, and trouble myself no more about it than many a town councilor or juryman bothers his head about the verdicts which he signs and approves, without making it my business to prove it true, and as if asleep, give in my vote. You must also yourself admit, my just reader, that it is necessary in our time to lie the truth in among the people.

Our father Adam and mother Eve, it happened a short time since, came up out of their graves and were at their estate Tielkestad, where they presently proclaimed over the whole land a diet, or assemblage, at which all their dear children of both sexes should appear in person or by duly qualified substitute, in order that their universal parents might see and rejoice in their Northern seed, might learn how apt was each and how he had improved his talent, and admonish him to do honor to his creation.

Here was gathered together a considerable assembly of people. Each one, from the greatest to the least, went forward to kiss grandpapa's and grandmamma's hand. They bent and they bowed, and most of the inhabitants of the land now vied with each other with all their might of soul and body, with internal and external senses, to see who should most please their first parents. For it may be believed it was no joke to be able to rejoice them with their excellence, now, some five thousand years after their death, and to put in their minds the thought, «See, Adam, what a son you have!» «See, Eve, what a daughter!» etc.

Adam, who honored the first creation, and loved nature's activity, which tolerates no compulsions or additions, was amazed when he saw his children, for he did not know half of them. «Where have they come from?» said he. «They are never mine, unless forsooth there shall have been a *new creation*, in the overseeing of which neither God nor I has had a part.» Eve had indeed been proud of so many offspring, but was somewhat abashed at these words, and said, «I should fear, sire, that you made me out an indifferent woman, if all did not know that we were alone in our conjugal state.» «Well enough is it web of my weft,» he answered, «but the children so disguise themselves in their attempt to please, that they lose all the charm which a spontaneous activity should otherwise most easily possess. Yet what am I saying? I readily see that our fall is the reason of this and of many disorders.» «It seems to me,» said Eve, «that you should have a review, and teach the poor children how they should conduct themselves so as not to continue in so monstrous a condition.»

Well, this was arranged, and all were now to pass before the eye of Adam, whether they had changed themselves or not. He had seated himself on a wall of earth, and all the liberal arts stood round about him. «Dear children,» said he to his offspring, «come forward now, in order that I may see how you conduct yourselves. The inordinate desire of honor is the reason for this *new creation*,— which does not however seek the honor of the great Creator, but your own.» When any of his children came forward who without affectation lisped their tender thoughts, they were kissed with tears by the old man and matron, who said that nature in them was not restrained, and wished that they might henceforth continue in such freedom. «Behold, this,» said they, «produces pleasure, without you yourselves knowing it; and this is the kernel of the art of pleasing.» Many court worshipers and people of the upper ranks of life, where ambition takes firmest hold of the body, also went forward, who for the most part had so well exercised themselves in appearances that they seemed neither in action nor word to be affected. These too won tolerably well, in this way, the commendation of the old people. Yet there were some of them who particularly thought to please kings and princes, who took upon themselves a more zealous appearance than they had inherited, and bore their bodies in greater state than birth had given them, beneath costly garments arrayed in precise order, so that they by this means spoiled all their beauty; for Adam had only aversion for such artificial figures.

But what he did not have in them, he did have in a part of those who followed. These were people of ordinary condition who vied with the first, indeed with their own natures, in acquiring charm. When these latter had noticed that the people of rank had some fault or peculiar manner, then straightway seized by this wretched desire of honor, they wished at least to resemble the great in bagatelles. Some set one or two wrinkles on their foreheads; some, a particular expression about the mouth; some lisped or stammered purposely, and introduced extraordinary sounds into their speech; some affected strange laughter; some had a wonderful bend of the shoulders; some a simulated walk; some gave themselves political or statistical features, etc., etc.; and all directly opposed to their otherwise natural manner. « Yes, I can tell you right straight out," said Adam; «I have not a little esteem for you: but listen, I will tell you a little story. It has been told me that my famous son, Alexander the Great, once upon a time twisted his neck out of joint, so that he was obliged to walk with his head somewhat awry. Straightway were all of his lords and his courtiers moved to walk in the same manner, especially before his eyes, with the thought of pleasing him exceedingly. But among those who, whether out of zeal for their master or of love for themselves, would particularly be like the king, one twisted his neck so badly that his valiant prince, grown angry at such buffoonery, gave him so heavy a blow that the cuff set the heads right again of the whole court and army. If I were able now, I would certainly deal out many an affectionate blow to remedy all the evil habits with which you think to please me.»

(I wish that Argus had to-day the same smart as a box on the ear, for we saw this morning many affected cripples as sound and active as when they came into the world.)

« A part of you," continued Adam, «I notice, compel yourselves to limp and stoop very seriously and with great discomfort on canes, as if twenty-year-old legs were already afflicted with the rich man's sickness. But if some one took the canes and taught the young to spring, he would do rightly. Do you think it is no advantage to have good legs? If you think in this manner to imitate celebrated people, as has been said, then you shall know that it often offends him who is aped as much as it disfigures the ape himself.»

Many of our women who daily vie with each other for the possession of the greatest charm came forward, with the idea that the old people's hearts would be rejoiced with their comeliness. But that did not fall out well, since the one made a grimace by setting her mouth in a churchly manner; the other changed her features in that she wished to show her beautiful teeth; the third turned her eyes so strangely that she both blinked and squinted; the fourth had given herself a beautiful skin with ingredients from the apothecary's shop; the fifth assumed a fatigued gait; the sixth purposely appeared somewhat ill and languid. A pastor's wife forced her mild countenance into a scornful mien; a burgher's wife sweetened her mouth with ill-pronounced French words, and kept her body immovable because of her beautiful clothes; a merchant's daughter could think of nothing else than to bow; another maiden twisted her face over both shoulders with a stiff glance, etc., etc.: so that Eve said:—«What is this? Will you please me with force? Ah, foolish women, if you wish truly to please, then you should not think of it. Such a thing must come to you unwittingly.»

When Eve said this, some men lamented the vanity and elegant frivolity of a part of the women; but they were brought up sharply, for Adam said:—«Will you now again transform nature, and make that into heaviness which is created for your pleasure and refreshing help? It befits you, it may be, better than that to be ill-favored. If any of you are born to seriousness, then it well becomes that one that she is so; but if you desire that others shall be like you and bother themselves with your thoughts, then is that ill-conceived. For example, a woman may indeed amuse herself with books and little acts of cleverness; but if she makes study her trade, then she becomes a pedant.»

The malcontents, however, complained again that their mistresses desired that men should resemble them in all things except in sex, and hold them otherwise wholly as women. But Adam replied:—«If you are such fools, then shall you have advice. I see many gallants who readily undergo such a transformation, but that accords with their nature as does clay with straw, and surely an intelligent woman does not like it herself.»

Further, Adam said:—«Now I must laugh! Look at that bashful youth yonder in the crowd, who is so fearful of sinning against the customs of affectation that he does not know how he shall hold his hands. Now he sticks them here, and now there. When he bows, he looks back with perplexity at all to see if he did rightly.»

At that moment there came forward some scholars and poets, who with references presented their works and verses, some of which they read. But Adam said:—«Children, you were born to be shoemakers. You had understood awls better than pens. At a trade you had wrought out profit and pleasure, but not in study. Endowments are of many kinds, and every one must consider which of them he has received.»

Thereupon some of the clergy came forward with soft steps, wholly assured that they would receive a caress from the old man for every time they had named him in their sermons. But when the pretended pious went along, he became straightway displeased. What should there avail the measured-out words, and the forced high-flown delivery, filled with roses without fragrance! Suppose that he had seen some of them in the pulpit with their comedian affectations, or how unbecomingly they threw themselves and moved about there! Adam said shortly to them, «Such nonsense is unnecessary in your sacred office.» In this consisted the whole caress.

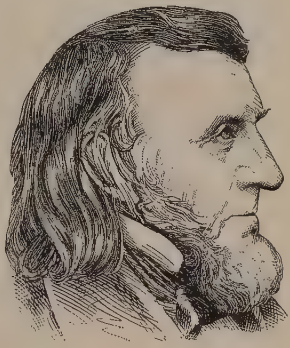
It is impossible for me to remember or to be able to describe all of those who at this time disgraced themselves before father Adam and mother Eve. This I know, that Japhet's grandsire pronounced this word of admonition:—«My descendants,» said he, «let it be fairly seen that you do not so badly disfigure yourselves as you have hitherto done. Let not the one take the other's talent and decry his own. Prove yourselves what character you own and abide with it; so shall you mark in each other that there is not one who is not made pleasing in his way, if it be rightly used. A surly man may be agreeable even in his surliness, and so on. Moreover, everyone shall give himself to the service in the state to which he is fallen, and shall not, eager of honor, offer violence to nature, of which I see among you so many examples that I just now—» Coughing deprived the old man of words, so that he stopped short, and straightway, as may be believed, the whole crowd made grimace upon grimace and laughed at him. The poor old couple were glad to get away from Tielkestad and lay themselves in their graves. So it went with the assemblage. Yes, believe me, surely. He who will tell the truth appears at times like a hen on a perch in windy weather.

Translation of William H. Carpenter.

RICHARD HENRY DANA, SENIOR

(1787–1879)

Richard Henry Dana the elder, although he died less than twenty years ago, belonged to the first generation of American writers; he was born in 1787, in Cambridge, four years after Washington Irving. He came of a distinguished and scholarly family: his father had been minister to Russia during the Revolution, and was afterwards Chief Justice of Massachusetts; through his mother he was descended from Anne Bradstreet. At the age of ten he went to Newport to live with his maternal grandfather, William Ellery, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, and remained until he entered Harvard. The wild rock-bound coast scenery impressed him deeply, and ever after the sea was one of his ruling passions. Only one familiar with all the moods of the ocean could have written ‹The Buccaneer.› After quitting college he studied law, and was admitted to the Boston bar. Literature however proved the stronger attraction, and in 1818 he left his profession to assist in conducting the then newly founded North American Review. The critical papers he contributed to it startled the conservative literary circles by their audacity in defending the new movement in English poetry, and passing lightly by their idol Pope. Indeed, his unpopularity debarred him from succeeding the first editor. He withdrew, and began the publication of The Idle Man in numbers, modeled on Salmagundi and the Sketch-Book. His contributions consisted of critical papers and his novelettes ‹Paul Felton,› ‹Tom Thornton,› and ‹Edward and Mary.› Not finding many readers, he discontinued it after the first volume. He then contributed for some years to the New York Review, conducted by William Cullen Bryant, and to the United States Review. In 1827 appeared ‹The Buccaneer and Other Poems›; in 1833 the same volume was enlarged and the contributions to The Idle Man were added, under the title ‹Poems and Prose Writings.› Seventeen years later he closed his literary career by publishing the complete edition of his ‹Poems and Prose Writings,› in two volumes, not having


Richard H. Dana

materially added either to his verse or fiction. After that time he lived in retirement, spending his summers in his seaside home by the rocks and breakers of Cape Ann, and the winters in Boston. He died in 1879.

Dana's literary activity falls within the first third of this century. During that period, unproductive of great work, he ranked among the foremost writers. His papers in the North American Review, as the first original criticism on this side of the Atlantic, marked an era in our letters. He was one of the first to recognize the genius of Wordsworth and of Coleridge; under the influence of the latter he wrote the poem by which he is chiefly known, 'The Buccaneer.' He claimed for it a basis of truth; it is in fact a story out of 'The Pirate's Own Book,' with the element of the supernatural added to convey the moral lesson. His verse is contained in a slender volume. It lacks fluency and melody, but shows keen perception of Nature's beauty, especially in her sterner, more solemn moods, and sympathy with the human heart. Dana was not so much a poet born with the inevitable gift of song (he would otherwise not have become almost silent during the last fifty years of his life), as a man of strong intellect who in his youth turned to verse for recreation.

Though best known by his poems, he stands out strongest and most original as novelist. 'Paul Felton,' his masterpiece in prose, is a powerful study of a diseased condition of mind. In its searching psychologic analysis it stands quite apart from the more or less flaccid production of its day. He indeed could not escape the influence of Charles Brockden Brown, whom he greatly admired, and he in turn reached out forward toward Poe and other writers of the analytic school. One powerful story of Poe's, indeed, seems to have been suggested by Dana's work: the demon horse in 'Metzengerstein' is a superior copy of the Spectre Horse in 'The Buccaneer.' These stories were not popular in his day: they are too remote from ordinary life, too gloomy and painful; they have no definite locality or nationality; their characters have little in common with every-day humanity. His prose style however is clear, direct, and strong.

Even after he ceased to write, he had an important influence on American letters by the independence of his opinions, his friendships with literary men, chief among whom was Bryant, and his live interest in the younger literature produced under conditions more favorable and more inspiring than he had known.

THE ISLAND

From ‘The Buccaneer’

The Island lies nine leagues away;
Along its solitary shore
Of craggy rock and sandy bay,
No sound but ocean's roar,
Save where the bold wild sea-bird makes her home,
Her shrill cry coming through the sparkling foam.

But when the light winds lie at rest,
And on the glassy, heaving sea,
The black duck with her glossy breast
Sits swinging silently,
How beautiful! no ripples break the reach,
And silvery waves go noiseless up the beach.

And inland rests the green, warm dell;
The brook comes tinkling down its side;
From out the trees the Sabbath bell
Rings cheerful, far and wide,
Mingling its sound with bleatings of the flocks
That feed about the vale among the rocks.

Nor holy bell nor pastoral bleat
In former days within the vale;
Flapped in the bay the pirate's sheet;
Curses were on the gale;
Rich goods lay on the sand, and murdered men:
Pirate and wrecker kept their revels then.

But calm, low voices, words of grace,
Now slowly fall upon the ear;
A quiet look is in each face,
Subdued and holy fear.
Each motion gentle; all is kindly done—
Come, listen how from crime this Isle was won.

THE DOOM OF LEE

From ‹The Buccaneer›

WHO'S sitting on that long black ledge
Which makes so far out in the sea,
Feeling the kelp-weed on its edge?
Poor idle Matthew Lee!
So weak and pale? A year and little more.
And bravely did he lord it round this shore!

And on the shingles now he sits,
And rolls the pebbles 'neath his hands;
Now walks the beach; then stops by fits,
And scores the smooth wet sands;
Then tries each cliff and cove and jut that bounds
The isles; then home from many weary rounds.

They ask him why he wanders so,
From day to day, the uneven strand?
«I wish, I wish that I might go!
But I would go by land;
And there's no way that I can find—I've tried
All day and night!»—He seaward looked, and sighed.

It brought the tear to many an eye
That once his eye had made to quail.
«Lee, go with us; our sloop is nigh;
Come! help us hoist her sail.»
He shook.—«You know the Spirit Horse I ride!
He'll let me on the sea with none beside!»

He views the ships that come and go,
Looking so like to living things.
O! 'tis a proud and gallant show
Of bright and broad-spread wings,
Making it light around them, as they keep
Their course right onward through the unsounded deep.

And where the far-off sand-bars lift
Their backs in long and narrow line,
The breakers shout, and leap, and shift,
And send the sparkling brine
Into the air, then rush to mimic strife:
Glad creatures of the sea, and full of life!—

But not to Lee. He sits alone;
No fellowship nor joy for him.
Borne down by woe, he makes no moan,
Though tears will sometimes dim
That asking eye — oh, how his worn thoughts crave —
Not joy again, but rest within the grave.

. . . .

To-night the charmèd number's told.
«Twice have I come for thee,» it said.
«Once more, and none shall thee behold.
Come! live one, to the dead!» —
So hears his soul, and fears the coming night;
Yet sick and weary of the soft calm light.

Again he sits within that room;
All day he leans at that still board;
None to bring comfort to his gloom,
Or speak a friendly word.
Weakened with fear, lone, haunted by remorse,
Poor shattered wretch, there waits he that pale Horse.

Not long he waits. Where now are gone
Peak, citadel, and tower, that stood
Beautiful, while the west sun shone
And bathed them in his flood
Of airy glory! — Sudden darkness fell;
And down they went, — peak, tower, citadel.

The darkness, like a dome of stone,
Ceils up the heavens. 'Tis hush as death —
All but the ocean's dull low moan.
How hard Lee draws his breath!
He shudders as he feels the working Power.
Arouse thee, Lee! up! man thee for thine hour!

'Tis close at hand; for there, once more,
The burning ship. Wide sheets of flame
And shafted fire she showed before; —
Twice thus she hither came; —
But now she rolls a naked hulk, and throws
A wasting light; then, settling, down she goes.

And where she sank, up slowly came
The Spectre Horse from out the sea.
And there he stands! His pale sides flame.
He'll meet thee shortly, Lee.

He treads the waters as a solid floor:
He's moving on. Lee waits him at the door.

They're met. «I know thou com'st for me,»
Lee's spirit to the Spectre said;
«I know that I must go with thee —
Take me not to the dead.
It was not I alone that did the deed!»
Dreadful the eye of that still, spectral Steed!

Lee cannot turn. There is a force
In that fixed eye which holds him fast.
How still they stand! — the man and horse.
«Thine hour is almost past.»
«Oh, spare me,» cries the wretch, «thou fearful one!»
«My time is full — I must not go alone.»

«I'm weak and faint. Oh let me stay!»
«Nay, murderer, rest nor stay for thee!»
The horse and man are on their way;
He bears him to the sea.
Hark! how the Spectre breathes through this still night!
See, from his nostrils streams a deathly light!

He's on the beach, but stops not there;
He's on the sea! that dreadful horse!
Lee flings and writhes in wild despair!
In vain! The spirit-corse
Holds him by fearful spell; he cannot leap.
Within that horrid light he rides the deep.

It lights the sea around their track —
The curling comb, and dark steel wave:
There yet sits Lee the Spectre's back —
Gone! gone! and none to save!
They're seen no more; the night has shut them in.
May Heaven have pity on thee, man of sin!

The earth has washed away its stain;
The sealed-up sky is breaking forth,
Mustering its glorious hosts again,
From the far south and north;
The climbing moon plays on the rippling sea.—
Oh, whither on its waters rideth Lee?

PAUL AND ABEL

From ‹Paul Felton›

He took a path which led through the fields back of his house, and wound among the steep rocks part way up the range of high hills, till it reached a small locust grove, where it ended. He began climbing a ridge near him, and reaching the top of it, beheld all around him a scene desolate and broken as the ocean. It looked for miles as if one immense gray rock had been heaved up and shattered by an earthquake. Here and there might be seen shooting out of the clefts, old trees, like masts at sea. It was as if the sea in a storm had become suddenly fixed, with all its ships upon it. The sun shone glaring and hot on it, but there was neither life, nor motion, nor sound; the spirit of desolation had gone over it, and it had become the place of death. His heart sunk within him, and something like a superstitious dread entered him. He tried to rouse himself, and look about with a composed mind. It was in vain — he felt as if some dreadful unseen power stood near him. He would have spoken, but he dared not in such a place.

To shake this off, he began clambering over one ridge after another, till, passing cautiously round a beetling rock, a sharp cry from out it shot through him. Every small jut and precipice sent it back with a Satanic taunt; and the crowd of hollows and points seemed for the instant alive with thousands of fiends. Paul's blood ran cold, and he scarcely breathed as he waited for their cry again; but all was still. Though his mind was of a superstitious cast, he had courage and fortitude; and ashamed of his weakness, he reached forward, and stooping down looked into the cavity. He started as his eye fell on the object within it. «Who and what are you?» cried he. «Come out, and let me see whether you are man or devil.» And out crawled a miserable boy, looking as if shrunk up with fear and famine. «Speak, and tell me who you are, and what you do here,» said Paul. The poor fellow's jaws moved and quivered, but he did not utter a sound. His spare frame shook, and his knees knocked against each other as in an ague fit. Paul looked at him for a moment. His loose shambly frame was nearly bare to the bones, his light sunburnt hair hung long and straight round his thin jaws and white eyes, that shone with a delirious glare, as if his mind had been terror-struck. There was a sickly, beseeching smile about his mouth. His skin, between the freckles, was as white as a leper's, and his teeth long and yellow. He appeared like one who had witnessed the destruction about him, and was the only living thing spared, to make death seem more horrible.

« Who put you here to starve ? » said Paul to him.

« Nobody, sir.»

«Why did you come, then ?»

«Oh, I can't help it; I must come.»

«Must! And why must you ?» The boy looked round timidly, and crouching near Paul, said in a tremulous, low voice, his eyes glancing fearfully through the chasm, «'Tis He, 'tis He that makes me!» Paul turned suddenly round, and saw before him for the first time the deserted tract of pine wood and sand which has been described. «Who and where is he ?» asked Paul impatiently, expecting to see some one.

« There, there, in the wood yonder,» answered the boy, crouching still lower, and pointing with his finger, whilst his hand shook as if palsied.

« I see nothing,» said Paul, «but these pines. What possesses you ? Why do you shudder so, and look so pale ? Do you take the shadows of the trees for devils ?»

« Don't speak of them. They'll be on me, if you talk of them here,» whispered the boy eagerly. Drops of sweat stood on his brow from the agony of terror he was in. As Paul looked at the lad, he felt something like fear creeping over him. He turned his eyes involuntarily to the wood again. « If we must not talk here,» said he at last, «come along with me, and tell me what all this means.» The boy rose, and followed close to Paul.

«Is it the Devil you have seen, that you shake so ?»

« You have named him; I never must,» said the boy. « I have seen strange sights, and heard sounds whispered close to my ears, so full of spite, and so dreadful, I dared not look round lest I should see some awful face at mine. I've thought I felt it touch me sometimes.»

« And what wicked thing have you done, that they should haunt you so ?»

« Oh, sir, I was a foolhardy boy. Two years ago I was not afraid of anything. Nobody dared go into the wood, or even so much as over the rocks, to look at it, after what happened there.»—« I've heard a foolish story,» said Paul.—« So once, sir, the thought took me that I would go there a-bird's-nesting, and bring home the eggs and show to the men. And it would never go out of my mind after, though I began to wish I hadn't thought any such thing. Every night when I went to bed I would lie and say to myself, 'To-morrow is the day for me to go;' and I did not like to be alone in the dark, and wanted some one with me to touch me when I had bad dreams. And when I waked in the morning, I felt as if something dreadful was coming upon me before night. Well, every day,—I don't know how it was,—I found myself near this ridge; and every time I went farther and farther up it, though I grew more and more frightened. And when I had gone as far as I dared, I was afraid to wait, but would turn and make away so fast that many a time I fell down some of these places, and got lamed and bruised. The boys began to think something, and would whisper each other and look at me; and when they found I saw them, they would turn away. It grew hard for me to be one at their games, though once I used to be the first chosen in I can't tell how it was, but all this only made me go on; and as the boys kept out of the way, I began to feel as if I must do what I had thought of, and as if there was somebody, I couldn't think who, that was to have me and make me do what he pleased. So it went on, sir, day after day," continued the lad, in a weak, timid tone, but comforted at finding one to tell his story to; "till at last I reached as far as the hollow where you just now frighted me so, when I heard you near me. I didn't run off as I used to from the other places, but sat down under the rock. Then I looked out and saw the trees. I tried to get up and run home, but I couldn't; I dared not come out and go round the corner of the rock. I tried to look another way, but my eyes seemed fastened on the trees; I couldn't take 'em off. At last I thought something told me it was time for me to go on. I got up."

Here poor Abel shook so that he seized hold of Paul's arm to help him. Paul recoiled as if an unclean creature touched him. The boy shrunk back.

"Go on," said Paul recovering himself. The boy took comfort from the sound of another's voice:—"I went a little way down the hollow, sir, as if drawn along. Then I came to a steep place; I put my legs over to let myself down; my knees grew so weak I dared not trust myself; I tried to draw them up, but the strength was all gone out of them, and then my feet were as heavy as if made of lead. I gave a screech, and there was a yell close to me and for miles round, that nigh stunned me. I can't say how, but the last thing I knew was my leaping along the rocks, while there was nothing but flames of fire shooting all round me. It was scarce midday when I left home; and when I came to myself under the locusts it was growing dark.»

« Rest here awhile,» said Paul, looking at the boy as at some mysterious being, «and tell out your story.»

Glad at being in company, the boy sat down upon the grass, and went on with his tale:—«I crawled home as well as I could, and went to bed. When I was falling asleep I had the same feeling I had when sitting over the rock. I dared not lie in bed any longer, for I couldn't keep awake while there. Glad was I when the day broke, and I saw a neighbor open his door and come out. I was not well all day, and I tried to think myself more ill than I was, because I somehow thought that then I needn't go to the wood. But the next day He was not to be put off; and I went, though I cried and prayed all the way that I might not be made to go. But I could not stop till I had got over the hill, and reached the sand round the wood. When I put my foot on it, all the joints in me jerked as if they would not hold together, so that I cried out with the pain. When I came under the trees there was a deep sound, and great shadows were all round me. My hair stood on end, and my eyes kept glimmering; yet I couldn't go back. I went on till I found a crow's nest. I climbed the tree, and took out the eggs. The old crow kept flying round and round me. As soon as I felt the eggs in my hand and my work done, I dropped from the tree and ran for the hollow. I can't tell how it was, but it seemed to me that I didn't gain a foot of ground—it was just as if the whole wood went with me. Then I thought He had me his. The ground began to bend and the trees to move. At last I was nigh blind. I struck against one tree and another till I fell to the ground. How long I lay there I can't tell; but when I came to I was on the sand, the sun blazing hot upon me and my skin scorched up. I was so stiff and ached so, I could hardly stand upright. I didn't feel or think anything after this; and hardly knew where I was till somebody came and touched me, and asked me whether I was walking in my sleep; and I looked up and found myself close home.

«The boys began to gather round me as if I were something strange; and when I looked at them they would move back from me. ‘What have you been doing, Abel?’ one of them asked me at last. ‘No good, I warrant you,’ answered another, who stood back of me. And when I turned around to speak to him he drew behind the others, as if afraid I should harm him;—and I was too weak and frightened to hurt a fly. ‘See his hands; they are stained all over.’—‘And there's a crow's egg, as I'm alive!’ said another.—‘And the crow is the Devil's bird, Tom, isn't it?’ asked a little boy. ‘O Abel, you've been to that wood and made yourself over to Him.’—They moved off one after another, every now and then turning round and looking at me as if I were cursed. After this they would not speak to me nor come nigh me. I heard people talking, and saw them going about, but not one of them all could I speak to, or get to come near me; it was dreadful, being so alone! I met a boy that used to be with me all day long; and I begged him not to go off from me so, and to stop, if it were only for a moment. ‘You played with me once,’ said I; ‘and won't you do so much as look at me, or ask me how I am, when I am so weak and ill too?’ He began to hang back a little, and I thought from his face that he pitied me. I could have cried for joy, and was going up to him, but he turned away. I called out after him, telling him that I would not so much as touch him with my finger, or come any nearer to him, if he would only stop and speak one word to me; but he went away shaking his head, and muttering something, I hardly knew what,—how that I did not belong to them, but was the Evil One's now. I sat down on a stone and cried, and wished that I was dead; for I couldn't help it, though it was wicked in me to do so.»

«And is there no one,» asked Paul, «who will notice you or speak to you? Do you live so alone now?» It made his heart ache to look down upon the pining, forlorn creature before him.

«Not a soul,» whined out the boy. «My grandmother is dead now, and only the gentlefolks give me anything; for they don't seem afraid of me, though they look as if they didn't like me, and wanted me gone. All I can, I get to eat in the woods, and I beg out of the village. But I dare not go far, because I don't know when He will want me. But I am not alone, He's with me day and night. As I go along the street in the daytime, I feel Him near me, though I can't see Him; and it is as if He were speaking to me; and yet I don't hear any words. He makes me follow Him to that wood; and I have to sit the whole day where you found me, and I dare not complain nor move, till I feel He will let me go. I've looked at the pines, sometimes, till I have seen spirits moving all through them. Oh, 'tis an awful place; they breathe cold upon me when He makes me go there."

"Poor wretch!" said Paul.

"I'm weak and hungry, and yet when I try to eat, something chokes me; I don't love what I eat."

"Come along with me, and you shall have something to nourish and warm you; for you are pale and shiver, and look cold here in the very sun."

The boy looked up at Paul, and the tears rolled down his cheeks at hearing one speak so kindly to him. He got up and followed meekly after to the house.

Paul, seeing a servant in the yard, ordered the boy something to eat. The man cast his eye upon Abel, and then looked at Paul as if he had not understood him. "I spoke distinctly enough," said Paul; "and don't you see that the boy is nigh starved?" The man gave a mysterious look at both of them, and with a shake of his head as he turned away, went to do as he was bid.

"What means the fellow?" said Paul to himself as he entered the house. "Does he take me to be bound to Satan too? Yet there may be bonds upon the soul, though we know it not; and evil spirits at work within us, of which we little dream. And are there no beings but those seen of mortal eye or felt by mortal touch? Are there not passing in and around this piece of moving mold, in which the spirit is pent up, those whom it hears not? those whom it has no finer sense whereby to commune with? Are all the instant joys that come and go, we know not whence nor whither, but creations of the mind? Or are they not rather bright and heavenly messengers, whom when this spirit is set free it will see in all their beauty? whose sweet sounds it will then drink in? Yes, it is, it is so; and all around us is populous with beings, now invisible to us as this circling air." . . .

The moon was down and the sky overcast when they began to wind among the rocks. Though Paul's walks had lain of late in this direction, he was not enough acquainted with the passage to find his way through it in the dark. Abel, who had traversed it often in the night, alone and in terror, now took heart at having some one with him at such an hour, and offered unhesitatingly to lead. «The boy winds round those crags with the speed and ease of a stream,» said Paul; «not so fast, Abel.»

«Take hold of the root which shoots out over your head, sir, for 'tis ticklish work getting along just here. Do you feel it, sir?»

«I have hold,» said Paul.

«Let yourself gently down by it, sir. You needn't be a bit afraid, for 'twill not give way; man couldn't have fastened it stronger.»

This was the first time Abel had felt his power, or had been of consequence to any one, since the boys had turned him out from their games; and it gave him a momentary activity, and an unsettled sort of spirit, which he had never known since then. He had been shunned and abhorred; and he believed himself the victim of some demoniac power. To have another in this fearful bondage with him, as Paul had intimated, was a relief from his dreadful solitariness in his terrors and sufferings. «And he said that it was I who was to work a curse on him,» muttered Abel. «It cannot be, surely, that such a thing as I am can harm a man like him!» And though Abel remembered Paul's kindness, and that this was to seal his own doom too, yet it stirred the spirit of pride within him.

«What are you muttering to yourself, there in the dark,» demanded Paul; «or whom talk you with, you withered wretch?» Abel shook in every joint at the sound of Paul's harsh voice.

«It is so dreadfully still here,» said Abel; «I hear nothing but your steps behind me, and they make me start.» This was true; for notwithstanding his touch of instant pride, his terrors and his fear of Paul were as great as ever.

«Speak louder then,» said Paul, «or hold your peace. I like not your muttering; it bodes no good.»

«It may bring a curse to you, worse than that on me, if a worse can be,» said Abel to himself; «but who can help it?»

Day broke before they cleared the ridge; a drizzling rain came on; and the wind, beginning to rise, drove through the crevices in the rocks with sharp whistling sounds which seemed to come from malignant spirits of the air.

They had scarcely entered the wood when the storm became furious; and the trees, swaying and beating with their branches against one another, seemed possessed of a supernatural madness, and engaged in wild conflict, as if there were life and passion in them; and their broken, decayed arms groaned like things in torment. The terror of these sights and sounds was too much for poor Abel; it nearly crazed him; and he set up a shriek that for a moment drowned the noise of the storm. It startled Paul; and when he looked at him, the boy's face was of a ghostly whiteness. The rain had drenched him to the skin; his clothes clung to his lean body, that shook as if it would come apart; his eyes flew wildly, and his teeth chattered against each other. The fears and torture of his mind gave something unearthly to his look, that made Paul start back. « Abel — boy — fiend — speak! What has seized you? »

« They told me so, » cried Abel — « I've done it — I led the way for you — they're coming, they're coming — we're lost! »

« Peace, fool, » said Paul, trying to shake off the power he felt Abel gaining over him, « and find us a shelter if you can. »

« There's only the hut, » said Abel, « and I wouldn't go into that if it rained fire. »

« And why not? »

« I once felt that it was for me to go, and I went so near as to see in at the door. And I saw something in the hut — it was not a man, for it flitted by the opening just like a shadow; and I heard two muttering something to one another; it wasn't like other sounds, for as soon as I heard it, it made me stop my ears. I couldn't stay any longer, and I ran till I cleared the wood. Oh! 'tis His biding-place, when He comes to the wood. »

« And is it of His own building? » asked Paul, sarcastically.

« No, » answered Abel; « 'twas built by the two wood-cutters; and one of them came to a bloody end, and they say the other died the same night, foaming at the mouth like one possessed. There it is, » said he, almost breathless, as he crouched down and pointed at the hut under the trees. « Do not go, sir, » he said, catching hold of the skirts of Paul's coat, — « I've never dared go nigher since. » — « Let loose, boy, » cried Paul, striking Abel's hand from his coat, « I'll not be fooled with. » Abel, alarmed at being left alone, crawled after Paul as far as he dared go; then taking hold of him once more, made a supplicating motion to him to stop; he was afraid to speak. Paul pushed on without regarding him.

The hut stood on the edge of a sand-bank that was kept up by a large pine, whose roots and fibres, lying partly bare, looked like some giant spider that had half buried himself in the sand. On the right of the hut was a patch of broken ground, in which were still standing a few straggling dried stalks of Indian corn; and from two dead trees hung knotted pieces of broken line, which had formerly served for a clothes-line. The hut was built of half-trimmed trunks of trees laid on each other, crossing at the four corners and running out at unequal lengths, the chinks partly filled in with sods and moss. The door, which lay on the floor, was of twisted boughs; and the roof, of the same, was caved in, and but partly kept out the sun and rain.

As Paul drew near the entrance he stopped, though the wind just then came in a heavy gust, and the rain fell like a flood. It was not a dread of what he might see within; but it seemed to him that there was a spell round him, drawing him nearer and nearer to its centre; and he felt the hand of some invisible power upon him. As he stepped into the hut a chill ran over him, and his eyes shut involuntarily. Abel watched him eagerly; and as he saw him enter, tossed his arms wildly shouting, "Gone, gone! They'll have me too—they're coming, they're coming!" and threw himself on his face to the ground.

Driven from home by his maddening passions, a perverse delight in self-torture had taken possession of Paul; and his mind so hungered for more intense excitement, that it craved to prove true all which its jealousy and superstition had imaged. He had walked on, lost in this fearful riot, but with no particular object in view, and taking only a kind of crazed joy in his bewildered state. Esther's love for him, which he at times thought past doubt feigned, the darkness of the night, and then the driving storm with its confused motions and sounds, made an uproar of the mind which drove out all settled purpose or thought.

The stillness of the place into which he had now entered, where was heard nothing but the slow, regular dripping of the rain from the broken roof upon the hard-trod floor; the lowered and distant sound of the storm without; the sudden change from the whirl and swaying of the trees to the steady walls of the building, put a sudden stop to the violent working of his brain, and he gradually fell into a stupor.

When Abel began to recover, he could scarcely raise himself from the ground. He looked round, but could see nothing of Paul. «They have bound us together,» said he; «and something is drawing me toward him. There is no help for me; I must go whither he goes.» As he was drawn nearer and nearer to the hut he seemed to struggle and hang back, as if pushed on against his will. At last he reached the doorway; and clinging to its side with a desperate hold, as if not to be forced in, put his head forward a little, casting a hasty glance into the building. «There he is, and alive!» breathed out Abel.

Paul's stupor was now beginning to leave him; his recollection was returning; and what had passed came back slowly and at intervals. There was something he had said to Esther before leaving home — he could not tell what; then his gazing after her as she drove from the house; then something of Abel,— and he sprang from the ground as if he felt the boy's touch again about his knees; then the ball-room, and a multitude of voices, and all talking of his wife. Suddenly she appeared darting by him; and Frank was there. Then came his agony and tortures again; all returned upon him as in the confusion of some horrible trance. Then the hut seemed to enlarge and the walls to rock; and shadows of those he knew, and of terrible beings he had never seen before, were flitting round him and mocking at him. His own substantial form seemed to him undergoing a change, and taking the shape and substance of the accursed ones at which he looked. As he felt the change going on he tried to utter a cry, but he could not make a sound nor move a limb. The ground under him rocked and pitched; it grew darker and darker, till everything was visionary; and he thought himself surrounded by spirits, and in the mansions of the damned. Something like a deep black cloud began to gather gradually round him. The gigantic structure, with its tall terrific arches, turned slowly into darkness, and the spirits within disappeared one after another, till as the ends of the cloud met and closed, he saw the last of them looking at him with an infernal laugh in his undefined visage.

Abel continued watching him in speechless agony. Paul's consciousness was now leaving him; his head began to swim —

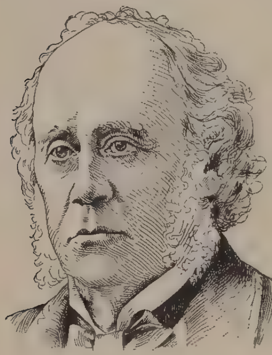
he reeled; and as his hand swept down the side of the hut, while trying to save himself, it struck against a rusty knife that had been left sticking loosely between the logs. «Let go, let go!» shrieked Abel; «there's blood on 't—'tis cursed, 'tis cursed.» As Paul swung round with the knife in his hand, Abel sprang from the door with a shrill cry, and Paul sank on the floor, muttering to himself, «What said They?»

When he began to come to himself a little, he was still sitting on the ground, his back against the wall. His senses were yet confused. He thought he saw his wife near him, and a bloody knife by his side. After sitting a little longer his mind gradually grew clearer, and at last he felt for the first time that his hand held something. As his eye fell on it and he saw distinctly what it was, he leaped upright with a savage yell and dashed the knife from him as if it had been an asp stinging him. He stood with his bloodshot eyes fastened on it, his hands spread, and his body shrunk up with horror. «Forged in hell! and for me, for me!» he screamed, as he sprang forward and seized it with a convulsive grasp. «Damned pledge of the league that binds us!» he cried, holding it up and glaring wildly on it. «And yet a voice did warn me—of what, I know not. Which of ye put it in this hand? Speak—let me look on you? D'ye hear me, and will not answer? Nay, nay, what needs it? This tells me, though it speaks not. I know your promptings now,» he said, folding his arms deliberately; «your work must be done; and I am doomed to it.»

RICHARD HENRY DANA, JUNIOR

(1815–1882)

The literary fame of Richard Henry Dana the younger rests on a single book, produced at the age of twenty-five. 'Two Years Before the Mast' stands unique in English literature: it reports a man's actual experiences at sea, yet touches the facts with a fine imagination. It is a bit of Dana's own life while on a vacation away from college. The manner in which he got his material was remarkable, but to the literature he came as by birthright, through his father, Richard Henry Dana the elder, then a well-known poet, novelist, and essayist. He was born in Cambridge in 1815, growing up in the intellectual atmosphere of that university town, and in due course of time entering Harvard College, where his father and grandfather before him had been trained in law and letters. An attack of the measles during his third year at college left him with weakened eyes, and an active outdoor life was prescribed as the only remedy. From boyhood up he had been passionately fond of the sea; small wonder, then, that he now determined to take a long sea voyage. Refusing a berth offered him on a vessel bound for the East Indies, he chose to go as common sailor before the mast, on a merchantman starting on a two-years' trading voyage around Cape Horn to California. At that time boys of good family from the New England coast towns often took such trips. Dana indeed found a companion in a former merchant's clerk of Boston. They left on August 14th, 1834, doubled Cape Horn, spent many months in the waters of the Pacific and on the coast of California, trading with the natives and taking in cargoes of hides, and returned to Boston in September, 1836. Young Dana, entirely cured of his weakness, re-entered college, graduated the next year, and then went to study in the law school of Harvard. During his cruise he had kept a journal, which he now worked over into the narrative that made him famous, and that bids fair to keep his name alive as long as boys, young or old, delight in sea stories. It is really not a story at all, but



R. H. Dana, Jr.

describes with much vivacity the whole history of a long trading voyage, the commonplace life of the sailor with its many hardships, including the savage brutality of captains with no restraint on passion or manners, and scant recreations; the sea in storm and calm, and the California coast before the gold fever, when but few Europeans were settled there, and hides were the chief export of a region whose riches lay still secreted under the earth. The great charm of the narrative lies in its simplicity and its frank statement of facts. Dana apparently did not invent anything, but depicted real men, men he had intimately known for two years, calling them even by their own names, and giving an unvarnished account of what they did and said. He never hung back from work or shirked his duty, but «roughed it» to the very end. As a result of these experiences, this book is the only one that gives any true idea of the sailor's life. Sea stories generally depend for their interest on the inventive skill of their authors; Dana knew how to hold the attention by a simple statement of facts. The book has all the charm and spontaneity of a keenly observant yet imaginative and cultivated mind, alive to all the aspects of the outer world, and gifted with that fine literary instinct which, knowing the value of words, expresses its thoughts with precision. Seafaring men have commented on his exactness in reproducing the sailor's phraseology. The book was published in 1840, translated into several languages, and adopted by the British Admiralty for distribution in the Navy. Few sailors are without a copy in their chest. ‹The Seaman's Friend,› which Dana published in the following year, was inspired by his indignation at the abuses he had witnessed in the merchant marine.

Dana did not follow up his first success, and his life henceforth belongs to the history of the bar and politics of Massachusetts, rather than to literature. The fame of his book brought to his law office many admiralty cases. In 1848 he was one of the founders of the Free Soil party; later he became an active abolitionist, and took a large part in the local politics of his State. For a year he lectured on international law in Harvard college. He contributed to the North American Review, and wrote besides on various legal topics. His one other book on travel, ‹To Cuba and Back, a Vacation Voyage,› the fruit of a trip to that island in 1859, though well written, never became popular. He retired from his profession in 1877, and spent the last years of his life in Paris and Italy. He died in Rome, January 6th, 1882.

A DRY GALE

From ‹Two Years Before the Mast›

We had been below but a short time before we had the usual premonitions of a coming gale,—seas washing over the whole forward part of the vessel, and her bows beating against them with a force and sound like the driving of piles. The watch, too, seemed very busy trampling about decks and singing out at the ropes. A sailor can tell by the sound what sail is coming in; and in a short time we heard the top-gallant-sails come in, one after another, and then the flying jib. This seemed to ease her a good deal, and we were fast going off to the land of Nod, when—bang, bang, bang on the scuttle, and «All hands, reef topsails, ahoy!» started us out of our berths, and it not being very cold weather, we had nothing extra to put on, and were soon on deck. I shall never forget the fineness of the sight. It was a clear and rather a chilly night; the stars were twinkling with an intense brightness, and as far as the eye could reach there was not a cloud to be seen. The horizon met the sea in a defined line. A painter could not have painted so clear a sky. There was not a speck upon it. Yet it was blowing great guns from the northwest. When you can see a cloud to windward, you feel that there is a place for the wind to come from; but here it seemed to come from nowhere. No person could have told from the heavens, by their eyesight alone, that it was not a still summer's night. One reef after another we took in the topsails, and before we could get them hoisted up we heard a sound like a short quick rattling of thunder, and the jib was blown to atoms out of the bolt-rope. We got the topsails set, and the fragments of the jib stowed away, and the foretopmast staysail set in its place, when the great mainsail gaped open, and the sail ripped from head to foot. «Lay up on that main yard and furl the sail, before it blows to tatters!» shouted the captain; and in a moment we were up, gathering the remains of it upon the yard. We got it wrapped round the yard, and passed gaskets over it as snugly as possible, and were just on deck again, when with another loud rent, which was heard throughout the ship, the foretopsail, which had been double-reefed, split in two athwartships, just below the reef-band, from earing to earing. Here again it was—

down yard, haul out reef-tackles, and lay out upon the yard for reefing. By hauling the reef-tackles chock-a-block we took the strain from the other earings, and passing the close-reef earing, and knotting the points carefully, we succeeded in setting the sail, close reefed.

We had but just got the rigging coiled up, and were waiting to hear «Go below the watch!» when the main royal worked loose from the gaskets, and blew directly out to leeward, flapping and shaking the mast like a wand. Here was a job for somebody. The royal must come in or be cut adrift, or the mast would be snapped short off. All the light hands in the starboard watch were sent up one after another, but they could do nothing with it. At length John, the tall Frenchman, the head of the starboard watch (and a better sailor never stepped upon a deck), sprang aloft, and by the help of his long arms and legs succeeded after a hard struggle,—the sail blowing over the yard-arm to leeward, and the skysail adrift directly over his head,—in smothering it and frapping it with long pieces of sinnet. He came very near being blown or shaken from the yard several times, but he was a true sailor, every finger a fish-hook. Having made the sail snug, he prepared to send the yard down, which was a long and difficult job; for frequently he was obliged to stop and hold on with all his might for several minutes, the ship pitching so as to make it impossible to do anything else at that height. The yard at length came down safe, and after it the fore and mizzen royal yards were sent down. All hands were then sent aloft, and for an hour or two we were hard at work, making the booms well fast, unreeving the studding sail and royal and skysail gear, getting rolling-ropes on the yard, setting up the weather breast-backstays, and making other preparations for a storm. It was a fine night for a gale, just cool and bracing enough for quick work, without being cold, and as bright as day. It was sport to have a gale in such weather as this. Yet it blew like a hurricane. The wind seemed to come with a spite, an edge to it, which threatened to scrape us off the yards. The force of the wind was greater than I had ever felt it before; but darkness, cold, and wet are the worst parts of a storm to a sailor.

Having got on deck again, we looked round to see what time of night it was, and whose watch. In a few minutes the man at the wheel struck four bells, and we found that the other watch was out and our own half out. Accordingly the starboard watch went below, and left the ship to us for a couple of hours, yet with orders to stand by for a call.

Hardly had they got below before away went the foretopmast staysail, blown to ribands. This was a small sail, which we could manage in the watch, so that we were not obliged to call up the other watch. We laid upon the bowsprit, where we were under water half the time, and took in the fragments of the sail; and as she must have some headsail on her, prepared to bend another staysail. We got the new one out into the nettings; seized on the tack, sheets, and halyards, and the hanks; manned the halyards, cut adrift the frapping-lines, and hoisted away; but before it was half-way up the stay it was blown all to pieces. When we belayed the halyards, there was nothing left but the bolt-rope. Now large eyes began to show themselves in the foresail; and knowing that it must soon go, the mate ordered us upon the yard to furl it. Being unwilling to call up the watch, who had been on deck all night, he roused out the carpenter, sailmaker, cook, and steward, and with their help we manned the foreyard, and after nearly half an hour's struggle, mastered the sail and got it well furled round the yard. The force of the wind had never been greater than at this moment. In going up the rigging it seemed absolutely to pin us down to the shrouds; and on the yard there was no such thing as turning a face to windward. Yet there was no driving sleet and darkness and wet and cold as off Cape Horn; and instead of stiff oilcloth suits, southwester caps, and thick boots, we had on hats, round jackets, duck trousers, light shoes, and everything light and easy. These things make a great difference to a sailor. When we got on deck the man at the wheel struck eight bells (four o'clock in the morning), and « All starbowlines, ahoy! » brought the other watch up, but there was no going below for us. The gale was now at its height, « blowing like scissors and thumb-screws »; the captain was on deck; the ship, which was light, rolling and pitching as though she would shake the long sticks out of her, and the sails were gaping open and splitting in every direction. The mizzen-topsail, which was a comparatively new sail and close reefed, split from head to foot in the bunt; the foretopsail went in one rent from clew to earing, and was blowing to tatters; one of the chain bobstays parted; the spritsailyard sprung in the slings, the martingale had slued away off to leeward; and owing to the long dry weather the lee rigging hung in large bights at every lurch. One of the main-topgallant shrouds had parted; and to crown all, the galley had got adrift and gone over to leeward, and the anchor on the lee bow had worked loose and was thumping the side. Here was work enough for all hands for half a day. Our gang laid out on the mizzen-topsailyard, and after more than half an hour's hard work furled the sail, though it bellied out over our heads, and again, by a slat of the wind, blew in under the yard with a fearful jerk and almost threw us off from the foot-ropes.

Double gaskets were passed round the yards, rolling tackles and other gear bowsed taut, and everything made as secure as it could be. Coming down, we found the rest of the crew just coming down the fore rigging, having furled the tattered topsail, or rather, swathed it round the yard, which looked like a broken limb bandaged. There was no sail now on the ship but the spanker and the close-reefed main-topsail, which still held good. But this was too much after-sail, and order was given to furl the spanker. The brails were hauled up, and all the light hands in the starboard watch sent out on the gaff to pass the gaskets; but they could do nothing with it. The second mate swore at them for a parcel of « sogers," and sent up a couple of the best men; but they could do no better, and the gaff was lowered down. All hands were now employed in setting up the lee rigging, fishing the spritsail yard, lashing the galley, and getting tackles upon the martingale, to bowse it to windward. Being in the larboard watch, my duty was forward, to assist in setting up the martingale. Three of us were out on the martingale guys and back-ropes for more than half an hour, carrying out, hooking, and unhooking the tackles, several times buried in the seas, until the mate ordered us in from fear of our being washed off. The anchors were then to be taken up on the rail, which kept all hands on the forecastle for an hour, though every now and then the seas broke over it, washing the rigging off to leeward, filling the lee scuppers breast-high, and washing chock aft to the taffrail.

Having got everything secure again, we were promising ourselves some breakfast, for it was now nearly nine o'clock in the forenoon, when the main-topsail showed evident signs of giving way. Some sail must be kept on the ship, and the captain ordered the fore and main spencer gaffs to be lowered down, and the two spencers (which were storm sails, brand-new, small, and made of the strongest canvas) to be got up and bent; leaving the main-topsail to blow away, with a blessing on it, if it would only last until we could set the spencers. These we bent on very carefully, with strong robands and seizings, and making tackles fast to the clews, bowsed them down to the water-ways. By this time the main-topsail was among the things that have been, and we went aloft to stow away the remnant of the last sail of all those which were on the ship twenty-four hours before. The spencers were now the only whole sails on the ship, and being strong and small, and near the deck, presenting but little surface to the wind above the rail, promised to hold out well. Hove-to under these, and eased by having no sail above the tops, the ship rose and fell, and drifted off to leeward like a line-of-battle ship.

It was now eleven o'clock, and the watch was sent below to get breakfast, and at eight bells (noon), as everything was snug, although the gale had not in the least abated, the watch was set and the other watch and idlers sent below. For three days and three nights the gale continued with unabated fury, and with singular regularity. There were no lulls, and very little variation in its fierceness. Our ship, being light, rolled so as almost to send the fore yard-arm under water, and drifted off bodily to leeward. All this time there was not a cloud to be seen in the sky, day or night; no, not so large as a man's hand. Every morning the sun rose cloudless from the sea, and set again at night in the sea in a flood of light. The stars, too, came out of the blue one after another, night after night, unobscured, and twinkled as clear as on a still frosty night at home, until the day came upon them. All this time the sea was rolling in immense surges, white with foam, as far as the eye could reach, on every side; for we were now leagues and leagues from shore.

EVERY-DAY SEA LIFE

From ‹Two Years Before the Mast›

The sole object was to make the time pass on. Any change was sought for which would break the monotony of the time; and even the two-hours' trick at the wheel, which came round to us in turn, once in every other watch, was looked upon as a relief. The never-failing resource of long yarns, which eke out many a watch, seemed to have failed us now; for we had been so long together that we had heard each other's stories told over and over again till we had them by heart; each one knew the whole history of each of the others, and we were fairly and literally talked out. Singing and joking we were in no humor for; and in fact any sound of mirth or laughter would have struck strangely upon our ears, and would not have been tolerated any more than whistling or a wind instrument. The last resort, that of speculating upon the future, seemed now to fail us; for our discouraging situation, and the danger we were really in (as we expected every day to find ourselves drifted back among the ice), «clapped a stopper» upon all that. From saying «*when* we get home,» we began insensibly to alter it «*if* we get home,» and at last the subject was dropped by a tacit consent.

In this state of things a new light was struck out, and a new field opened, by a change in the watch. One of our watch was laid up for two or three days by a bad hand (for in cold weather the least cut or bruise ripens into a sore), and his place was supplied by the carpenter. This was a windfall, and there was a contest who should have the carpenter to walk with him. As «Chips» was a man of some little education, and he and I had had a good deal of intercourse with each other, he fell in with me in my walk. He was a Finn, but spoke English well, and gave me long accounts of his country,—the customs, the trade, the towns, what little he knew of the government (I found he was no friend of Russia), his voyages, his first arrival in America, his marriage and courtship; he had married a countrywoman of his, a dressmaker, whom he met with in Boston. I had very little to tell him of my quiet sedentary life at home; and in spite of our best efforts, which had protracted these yarns through five or six watches, we fairly talked each other out, and

I turned him over to another man in the watch and put myself upon my own resources.

I commenced a deliberate system of time-killing, which united some profit with a cheering-up of the heavy hours. As soon as I came on deck, and took my place and regular walk, I began with repeating over to myself in regular order a string of matters which I had in my memory,—the multiplication table and the table of weights and measures; the Kanaka numerals; then the States of the Union, with their capitals; the counties of England, with their shire towns, and the kings of England in their order, and other things. This carried me through my facts, and being repeated deliberately, with long intervals, often eked out the first two bells. Then came the Ten Commandments, the thirty-ninth chapter of Job, and a few other passages from Scripture. The next in the order, which I seldom varied from, came Cowper's 'Castaway,' which was a great favorite with me; its solemn measure and gloomy character, as well as the incident it was founded upon, making it well suited to a lonely watch at sea. Then his 'Lines to Mary,' his address to the Jackdaw, and a short extract from 'Table Talk' (I abounded in Cowper, for I happened to have a volume of his poems in my chest); 'Ille et nefasto' from Horace, and Goethe's 'Erl-König.' After I had got through these, I allowed myself a more general range among everything that I could remember, both in prose and verse. In this way, with an occasional break by relieving the wheel, heaving the log, and going to the scuttle-butt for a drink of water, the longest watch was passed away; and I was so regular in my silent recitations that if there was no interruption by ship's duty I could tell very nearly the number of bells by my progress.

Our watches below were no more varied than the watch on deck. All washing, sewing, and reading was given up, and we did nothing but eat, sleep, and stand our watch, leading what might be called a Cape Horn life. The forecastle was too uncomfortable to sit up in; and whenever we were below, we were in our berths. To prevent the rain and the sea-water which broke over the bows from washing down, we were obliged to keep the scuttle closed, so that the forecastle was nearly air-tight. In this little wet leaky hole we were all quartered, in an atmosphere so bad that our lamp, which swung in the middle from the beams, sometimes actually burned blue, with a large circle of foul air about it. Still I was never in better health than after three weeks of this life. I gained a great deal of flesh, and we all ate like horses. At every watch when we came below, before turning in, the bread barge and beef kid were overhauled. Each man drank his quart of hot tea night and morning, and glad enough we were to get it; for no nectar and ambrosia were sweeter to the lazy immortals than was a pot of hot tea, a hard biscuit, and a slice of cold salt beef to us after a watch on deck. To be sure, we were mere animals, and had this life lasted a year instead of a month, we should have been little better than the ropes in the ship. Not a razor, nor a brush, nor a drop of water, except the rain and the spray, had come near us all the time: for we were on an allowance of fresh water—and who would strip and wash himself in salt water on deck, in the snow and ice, with the thermometer at zero?

A START; AND PARTING COMPANY

From ‹Two Years before the Mast›

The California had finished discharging her cargo, and was to get under way at the same time with us. Having washed down decks and got breakfast, the two vessels lay side by side in complete readiness for sea, our ensigns hanging from the peaks and our tall spars reflected from the glassy surface of the river, which since sunrise had been unbroken by a ripple. At length a few whiffs came across the water, and by eleven o'clock the regular northwest wind set steadily in. There was no need of calling all hands, for we had all been hanging about the forecastle the whole forenoon, and were ready for a start upon the first sign of a breeze. Often we turned our eyes aft upon the captain, who was walking the deck, with every now and then a look to windward. He made a sign to the mate, who came forward, took his station deliberately between the knightheads, cast a glance aloft, and called out, «All hands lay aloft and loose the sails!» We were half in the rigging before the order came, and never since we left Boston were the gaskets off the yards and the rigging overhauled in a shorter time. «All ready forward, sir!» «All ready the main!» «Crossjack yards all ready, sir!»

« Lay down, all hands but one on each yard! » The yard-arm and bunt gaskets were cast off; and each sail hung by the jigger, with one man standing by the tie to let it go. At the same moment that we sprang aloft a dozen hands sprang into the rigging of the California, and in an instant were all over her yards; and her sails too were ready to be dropped at the word. In the mean time our bow gun had been loaded and run out, and its discharge was to be the signal for dropping the sails. A cloud of smoke came out of our bows; the echoes of the gun rattled our farewell among the hills of California, and the two ships were covered from head to foot with their white canvas. For a few minutes all was uproar and apparent confusion; men jumping about like monkeys in the rigging; ropes and blocks flying, orders given and answered amid the confused noises of men singing out at the ropes. The topsails came to the mastheads with « Cheerly, men! » and in a few minutes every sail was set, for the wind was light. The head sails were backed, the windlass came round « slip — slap » to the cry of the sailors; — « Hove short, sir,» said the mate; — « Up with him! » — « Ay, ay, sir.» A few hearty and long heaves, and the anchor showed its head. « Hook cat! » The fall was stretched along the decks; all hands laid hold; — « Hurrah, for the last time,» said the mate; and the anchor came to the cathead to the tune of 'Time for us to go,' with a rollicking chorus. Everything was done quick, as though it *was* for the last time. The head yards were filled away, and our ship began to move through the water on her homeward-bound course.

The California had got under way at the same moment, and we sailed down the narrow bay abreast, and were just off the mouth, and, gradually drawing ahead of her, were on the point of giving her three parting cheers, when suddenly we found ourselves stopped short, and the California ranging fast ahead of us. A bar stretches across the mouth of the harbor, with water enough to float common vessels; but being low in the water, and having kept well to leeward, as we were bound to the southward, we had stuck fast, while the California, being light, had floated over.

We kept all sail on, in the hope of forcing over; but failing in this, we hove back into the channel. This was something of a damper to us, and the captain looked not a little mortified and vexed. « This is the same place where the Rosa got ashore, sir," observed our red-headed second mate, most mal-àpropos. A malediction on the Rosa, and him too, was all the answer he got, and he slunk off to leeward. In a few minutes the force of the wind and the rising of the tide backed us into the stream, and we were on our way to our old anchoring place, the tide setting swiftly up, and the ship barely manageable in the light breeze. We came-to in our old berth opposite the hide-house, whose inmates were not a little surprised to see us return. We felt as though we were tied to California; and some of the crew swore that they never should get clear of the «bloody» coast.

In about half an hour, which was near high water, the order was given to man the windlass, and again the anchor was catted; but there was no song, and not a word was said about the last time. The California had come back on finding that we had returned, and was hove-to, waiting for us, off the point. This time we passed the bar safely, and were soon up with the California, who filled away, and kept us company. She seemed desirous of a trial of speed, and our captain accepted the challenge, although we were loaded down to the bolts of our chain-plates, as deep as a sand-barge, and bound so taut with our cargo that we were no more fit for a race than a man in fetters; while our antagonist was in her best trim. Being clear of the point, the breeze became stiff, and the royal-masts bent under our sails, but we would not take them in until we saw three boys spring aloft into the rigging of the California; when they were all furled at once, but with orders to our boys to stay aloft at the topgallant mastheads and loose them again at the word. It was my duty to furl the fore-royal; and, while standing by to loose it again, I had a fine view of the scene. From where I stood, the two vessels seemed nothing but spars and sails, while their narrow decks, far below, slanting over by the force of the wind aloft, appeared hardly capable of supporting the great fabrics raised upon them. The California was to windward of us, and had every advantage; yet, while the breeze was stiff, we held our own. As soon as it began to slacken, she ranged a little ahead, and the order was given to loose the royals. In an instant the gaskets were off and the bunt dropped. «Sheet home the fore royal!» «Weather sheets home!»—«Lee sheets home!»—«Hoist away, sir!» is bawled from aloft.

"Overhaul your clew-lines!" shouts the mate. "Ay, ay, sir! all clear!" "Taut leech! belay! Well the lee brace; haul taut to windward,"—and the royals were set. These brought us up again; but the wind continuing light, the California set hers, and it was soon evident that she was walking away from us. Our captain then hailed and said that he should keep off to his course; adding, "She isn't the Alert now. If I had her in your trim she would have been out of sight by this time." This was good-naturedly answered from the California, and she braced sharp up, and stood close upon the wind up the coast; while we squared away our yards, and stood before the wind to the south-southwest. The California's crew manned her weather rigging, waved their hats in the air, and gave us three hearty cheers, which we answered as heartily, and the customary single cheer came back to us from over the water. She stood on her way, doomed to eighteen months' or two years' hard service upon that hated coast; while we were making our way home, to which every hour and every mile was bringing us nearer.

ALIGHIERI DANTE.

DANTE

(1265–1321)

BY CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

I

To acquire a love for the best poetry, and a just understanding of it, is the chief end of the study of literature; for it is by means of poetry that the imagination is quickened, nurtured, and invigorated, and it is only through the exercise of his imagination that man can live a life that is in a true sense worth living. For it is the imagination which lifts him from the petty, transient, and physical interests that engross the greater part of his time and thoughts in self-regarding pursuits, to the large, permanent, and spiritual interests that ennoble his nature, and transform him from a solitary individual into a member of the brotherhood of the human race.

In the poet the imagination works more powerfully and consistently than in other men, and thus qualifies him to become the teacher and inspirer of his fellows. He sees men, by its means, more clearly than they see themselves; he discloses them to themselves, and reveals to them their own dim ideals. He becomes the interpreter of his age to itself; and not merely of his own age is he the interpreter, but of man to man in all ages. For change as the world may in outward aspect, with the rise and fall of empires,—change as men may, from generation to generation, in knowledge, belief, and manners,—human nature remains unalterable in its elements, unchanged from age to age; and it is human nature, under its various guises, with which the great poets deal.

The Iliad and the Odyssey do not become antiquated to us. The characters of Shakespeare are perpetually modern. Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, stand alone in the closeness of their relation to nature. Each after his own manner gives us a view of life, as seen by the poetic imagination, such as no other poet has given to us. Homer, first of all poets, shows us individual personages sharply defined, but in the early stages of intellectual and moral development, the first representatives of the race at its conscious entrance upon the path of progress, with simple motives, simple theories of existence, simple and limited experience. He is plain and direct in the presentation of life, and in the substance no less than in the expression of his thought.

In Shakespeare's work the individual man is no less sharply defined, no less true to nature, but the long procession of his personages is wholly different in effect from that of the Iliad and the Odyssey. They have lost the simplicity of the older race; they are the products of a longer and more varied experience; they have become more complex. And Shakespeare is plain and direct neither in the substance of his thought nor in the expression of it. The world has grown older, and in the evolution of his nature man has become conscious of the irreconcilable paradoxes of life, and more or less aware that while he is infinite in faculty, he is also the quintessence of dust. But there is one essential characteristic in which Shakespeare and Homer resemble each other as poets,—that they both show to us the scene of life without the interference of their own personality. Each simply holds the mirror up to nature, and lets us see the reflection, without making comment on the show. If there be a lesson in it we must learn it for ourselves.

Dante comes between the two, and differs more widely from each of them than they from one another. They are primarily poets. He is primarily a moralist who is also a poet. Of Homer the man, and of Shakespeare the man, we know, and need to know, nothing; it is only with them as poets that we are concerned. But it is needful to know Dante as man, in order fully to appreciate him as poet. He gives us his world not as reflection from an unconscious and indifferent mirror, but as from a mirror that shapes and orders its reflections for a definite end beyond that of art, and extraneous to it. And in this lies the secret of Dante's hold upon so many and so various minds. He is the chief poet of man as a moral being.

To understand aright the work of any great poet we must know the conditions of his times; but this is not enough in the case of Dante. We must know not only the conditions of the generation to which he belonged, we must also know the specific conditions which shaped him into the man he was, and differentiated him from his fellows. How came he, endowed with a poetic imagination which puts him in the same class with Homer and Shakespeare, not to be content, like them, to give us a simple view of the phantasmagoria of life, but eager to use the fleeting images as instruments by which to enforce the lesson of righteousness, to set forth a theory of existence and a scheme of the universe?

The question cannot be answered without a consideration of the change wrought in the life and thoughts of men in Europe by the Christian doctrine as expounded and enforced by the Roman Church, and of the simultaneous changes in outward conditions resulting from the destruction of the ancient civilization, and the slow evolution of the modern world as it rose from the ruins of the old. The period which immediately preceded and followed the fall of the Roman Empire was too disorderly, confused, and broken for men during its course to be conscious of the directions in which they were treading. Century after century passed without settled institutions, without orderly language, without literature, without art. But institutions, languages, literature and art were germinating, and before the end of the eleventh century clear signs of a new civilization were manifest in Western Europe. The nations, distinguished by differences of race and history, were settling down within definite geographical limits; the various languages were shaping themselves for the uses of intercourse and of literature; institutions accommodated to actual needs were growing strong; here and there the social order was becoming comparatively tranquil and secure. Progress once begun became rapid, and the twelfth century is one of the most splendid periods of the intellectual life of man expressing itself in an infinite variety of noble and attractive forms. These new conditions were most strongly marked in France: in Provence at the South, and in and around the Île de France at the North; and from both these regions a quickening influence diffused itself eastward into Italy.

The conditions of Italy throughout the Dark and Middle Ages were widely different from those of other parts of Europe. Through all the ruin and confusion of these centuries a tradition of ancient culture and ancient power was handed down from generation to generation, strongly affecting the imagination of the Italian people, whether recent invaders or descendants of the old population. Italy had never had a national unity and life, and the divisions of her different regions remained as wide in the later as in the earlier times; but there was one sentiment which bound all her various and conflicting elements in a common bond, which touched every Italian heart and roused every Italian imagination,—the sentiment of the imperial grandeur and authority of Rome. Shrunken, feeble, fallen as the city was, the thought of what she had once been still occupied the fancy of the Italian people, determined their conceptions of the government of the world, and quickened within them a glow of patriotic pride. Her laws were still the main fount of whatsoever law existed for the maintenance of public and private right; the imperial dignity, however interrupted in transmission, however often assumed by foreign and barbarian conquerors, was still, to the imagination, supreme above all other earthly titles; the story of Roman deeds was known of all men; the legends of Roman heroes were the familiar tales of infancy and age. Cities that had risen since Rome fell claimed, with pardonable falsehood, to have had their origin from her, and their rulers adopted the designations of her consuls and her senators. The fragments of her literature that had survived the destruction of her culture were the models for the rude writers of ignorant centuries, and her language formed the basis for the new language which was gradually shaping itself in accordance with the slowly growing needs of expression. The traces of her material dominion, the ruins of her wide arch of empire, were still to be found from the far West to the farther East, and were but the types and emblems of her moral dominion in the law, the language, the customs, the traditions of the different lands. Nothing in the whole course of profane history has so affected the imaginations of men, or so influenced their destinies, as the achievements and authority of Rome.

The Roman Church inherited, together with the city, the tradition of Roman dominion over the world. Ancient Rome largely shaped modern Christianity,—by the transmission of the idea of the authority which the Empire once exerted to the Church which grew up upon its ruins. The tremendous drama of Roman history displayed itself to the imagination from scene to scene, from act to act, with completeness of poetic progress and climax,—first the growth, the extension, the absoluteness of material supremacy, the heathen being made the instruments of Divine power for preparing the world for the revelation of the true God; then the tragedy of Christ's death wrought by Roman hands, and the expiation of it in the fall of the Roman imperial power; followed by the new era in which Rome again was asserting herself as mistress of the world, but now with spiritual instead of material supremacy, and with a dominion against which the gates of hell itself should not prevail.

It was, indeed, not at once that this conception of the Church as the inheritor of the rights of Rome to the obedience of mankind took form. It grew slowly and against opposition. But at the end of the eleventh century, through the genius of Pope Gregory VII., the ideas hitherto disputed, of the supreme authority of the Pope within the Church and of the supremacy of the Church over the State, were established as the accepted ecclesiastical theory, and adopted as the basis of the definitely organized ecclesiastical system. Little more than a hundred years later, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, Innocent III. enforced the claims of the Church with a vigor and ability hardly less than that of his great predecessor, maintaining openly that the Pope—Pontifex Maximus—was the vicar of God upon earth.

This theory was the logical conclusion from a long series of historic premises; and resting upon a firm foundation of dogma, it was supported by the genuine belief, no less than by the worldly interests and ambitions, of those who profited by it. The ideal it presented was at once a simple and a noble conception,—narrow indeed, for the ignorance of men was such that only narrow conceptions, in matters relating to the nature and destiny of man and the order of the universe, were possible. But it was a theory that offered an apparently sufficient solution of the mysteries of religion, of the relation between God and man, between the visible creation and the unseen world. It was a theory of a material rather than a spiritual order: it reduced the things of the spirit into terms of the things of the flesh. It was crude, it was easily comprehensible, it was fitted to the mental conditions of the age.

The power which the Church claimed, and which to a large degree it exercised over the imagination and over the conduct of the Middle Ages, was the power which belonged to its head as the earthly representative and vicegerent of God. No wonder that such power was often abused, and that the corruption among the ministers of the Church was wide-spread. Yet in spite of abuse, in spite of corruption, the Church was the ark of civilization.

The religious—no less than the intellectual—life of Europe had revived in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and had displayed its fervor in the marvels of Crusades and of church-building,—external modes of manifesting zeal for the glory of God, and ardor for personal salvation. But with the progress of intelligence the spirit which had found its expression in these modes of service, now, in the thirteenth century in Italy, fired the hearts of men with an even more intense and far more vital flame, quickening within them sympathies which had long lain dormant, and which now at last burst into activity in efforts and sacrifices for the relief of misery, and for the bringing of all men within the fold of Christian brotherhood. St. Francis and St. Dominic, in founding their orders, and in setting an example to their brethren, only gave measure and direction to a common impulse.

Yet such were the general hardness of heart and cruelty of temper which had resulted from the centuries of violence, oppression, and suffering, out of which Italy with the rest of Europe was slowly emerging, that the strivings of religious emotion and the efforts of humane sympathy were less powerful to bring about an improvement in social order than influences which had their root in material conditions. Chief among these was the increasing strength of the civic communities, through the development of industry and of commerce. The people of the cities, united for the protection of their common interests, were gaining a sense of power. The little people, as they were called,—mechanics, tradesmen, and the like,—were organizing themselves, and growing strong enough to compel the great to submit to the restrictions of a more or less orderly and peaceful life. In spite of the violent contentions of the great, in spite of frequent civic uproar, of war with neighbors, of impassioned party disputes, in spite of incessant interruptions of their tranquillity, many of the cities of Italy were advancing in prosperity and wealth. No one of them made more rapid and steady progress than Florence.

The history of Florence during the thirteenth century is a splendid tale of civic energy and resolute self-confidence. The little city was full of eager and vigorous life. Her story abounds in picturesque incident. She had her experience of the turn of the wheel of Fortune, being now at the summit of power in Tuscany, now in the depths of defeat and humiliation.

The spiritual emotion, the improvement in the conditions of society, the increase of wealth, the growth in power of the cities of Italy, were naturally accompanied by a corresponding intellectual development, and the thirteenth century became for Italy what the twelfth had been for France, a period of splendid activity in the expression of her new life. Every mode of expression in literature and in the arts was sought and practiced, at first with feeble and ignorant hands, but with steady gain of mastery. At the beginning of the century the language was a mere spoken tongue, not yet shaped for literary use. But the example of Provence was strongly felt at the court of the Emperor Frederick II. in Sicily, and the first half of the century was not ended before many poets were imitating in the Italian tongue the poems of the troubadours. Form and substance were alike copied; there is scarcely a single original note; but the practice was of service in giving suppleness to the language, in forming it for nobler uses, and in opening the way for poetry which should be Italian in sentiment as well as in words. At the north of Italy the influence of the trouvères was felt in like manner. Everywhere the desire for expression was manifest. The spring had come, the young birds had begun to twitter, but no full song was yet heard. Love was the main theme of the poets, but it had few accents of sincerity; the common tone was artificial, was unreal.

In the second half of the century new voices are heard, with accents of genuine and natural feeling; the poets begin to treat the old themes with more freshness, and to deal with religion, politics, and morals, as well as with love. The language still possesses, indeed, the quality of youth; it is still pliant, its forms have not become stiffened by age, it is fit for larger use than has yet been made of it, and lies ready and waiting, like a noble instrument, for the hand of the master which shall draw from it its full harmonies and reveal its latent power in the service he exacts from it.

But it was not in poetry alone that the life of Italy found expression. Before the invention of printing,—which gave to the literary arts such an advantage as secured their pre-eminence,—architecture, sculpture, and painting were hardly less important means for the expression of the ideals of the imagination and the creative energy of man. The practice of them had never wholly ceased in Italy; but her native artists had lost the traditions of technical skill; their work was rude and childish. The conventional and lifeless forms of Byzantine art in its decline were adopted by workmen who no longer felt the impulse, and no longer possessed the capacity, of original design. Venice and Pisa, early enriched by Eastern commerce, and with citizens both instructed and inspired by knowledge of foreign lands, had begun great works of building even in the eleventh century; but these works had been designed, and mainly executed, by masters from abroad. But now the awakened soul of Italy breathed new life into all the arts in its efforts at self-expression. A splendid revival began. The inspiring influence of France was felt in the arts of construction and design as it had been felt in poetry. The magnificent display of the highest powers of the imagination and the intelligence in France, the creation during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries of the unrivaled productions of Gothic art, stimulated and quickened the growth of the native art of Italy. But the French forms were seldom adopted for direct imitation, as the forms of Provençal poetry had been. The power of classic tradition was strong enough to resist their attraction. The taste of Italy rejected the marvels of Gothic design in favor of modes of expression inherited from her own past, but vivified with fresh spirit, and adapted to her new requirements. The inland cities, as they grew rich through native industry and powerful through the organization of their citizens, were stirred with rivalry to make themselves beautiful, and the motives of religion no less than those of civic pride contributed to their adornment. The Church was the object of interest common to all. Piety, superstition, pride, emulation, all alike called for art in which their spirit should be embodied. The imagination answered to the call. The eyes of the artist were once more opened to see the beauty of life, and his hand sought to reproduce it. The bonds of tradition were broken. The Greek marble vase on the platform of the Duomo at Pisa taught Niccola Pisano the right methods of sculpture, and directed him to the source of his art in the study of nature. His work was a new wonder and delight, and showed the way along which many followed him. Painting took her lesson from sculpture, and before the end of the century both arts had become responsive to the demand of the time, and had entered upon that course of triumph which was not to end till, three centuries later, chisel and brush dropped from hands enfeebled in the general decline of national vigor, and incapable of resistance to the tyrannous and exclusive autocracy of the printed page.

But it was not only the new birth of sentiment and emotion which quickened these arts: it was also the aroused curiosity of men concerning themselves, their history, and the earth. They felt their own ignorance. The vast region of the unknown, which encircled with its immeasurable spaces the little tract of the known world, appealed to their fancy and their spirit of enterprise, with its boundless promise and its innumerable allurements to adventure. Learning, long confined and starved in the cell of the monk, was coming out into the open world, and was gathering fresh stores alike from the past and the present. The treasures of the wisdom and knowledge of the Greeks were eagerly sought, especially in translations of Aristotle,—translations which, though imperfect indeed, and disfigured by numberless misinterpretations and mistakes, nevertheless contained a body of instruction invaluable as a guide and stimulant to the awakened intelligence. Encyclopedic compends of knowledge put at the disposition of students all that was known or fancied in the various fields of science. The division between knowledge and belief was not sharply drawn, and the wonders of legend and of fable were accepted with as ready a faith as the actual facts of observation and of experience. Travelers for gain or for adventure, and missionaries for the sake of religion, were venturing to lands hitherto unvisited. The growth of knowledge, small as it was compared with later increase, widened thought and deepened life. The increase of thought strengthened the faculties of the mind. Man becomes more truly man in proportion to what he knows, and one of the most striking and characteristic features of this great century is the advance of man through increase of knowledge out of childishness towards maturity. The insoluble problems which had been discussed with astonishing acuteness by the schoolmen of the preceding generation were giving place to a philosophy of more immediate application to the conduct and discipline of life. The ‘Summa Theologica’ of St. Thomas Aquinas not only treated with incomparable logic the vexed questions of scholastic philosophy, but brought all the resources of a noble and well-trained intelligence and of a fine moral sense to the study and determination of the order and government of the universe, and of the nature and destiny of man.

The scope of learning remained, indeed, at the end of the century, narrow in its range. The little tract of truth which men had acquired lay encompassed by ignorance, like a scant garden-plot surrounded by a high wall. But here and there the wall was broken through, and paths were leading out into wider fields to be won for culture, or into deserts wider still, in which the wanderers should perish.

But as yet there was no comprehensive and philosophic grasp of the new conditions in their total significance; no harmonizing of their various elements into one consistent scheme of human life; no criticism of the new life as a whole. For this task was required not only acquaintance with the whole range of existing knowledge, by which the conceptions of men in regard to themselves and the universe were determined, but also a profound view of the meaning of life itself, and an imaginative insight into the nature of man. A mere image of the drama of life as presented to the eye would not suffice. The meaning of it would be lost in the confusion and multiplicity of the scene. The only possible explanation and reconcilement of its aspects lay in the universal application to them of the moral law, and in the exhibition of man as a spiritual and immortal being for whom this world was but the first stage of existence. This was the task undertaken and accomplished by Dante.

II

Of the events in Dante's life few are precisely ascertained, but of its general course enough is known, either from his own statements or from external testimony, to show the essential relations between his life and his work, and the influence of his experience upon his convictions and character. Most of the biographies of him are untrustworthy, being largely built up upon a foundation of inferences and suppositions, and often filled out with traditions and stories of which the greater part are certainly false and few have a likelihood of truth. The only strictly contemporary account of him is that given by the excellent Chronicler of Florence, Giovanni Villani, a man of weight and judgment, who in the ninth book of his Chronicle, under the year 1321, recording Dante's death, adds a brief narrative of his life and works; because, as he says, «on account of the virtues and knowledge and worth of so great a citizen, it seems to us to be fitting to give a perpetual memorial of him in this our chronicle, although the noble works left by him in writing afford a true testimonial to him, and honorable fame to our city.» «Dante was,» says Villani, «an honorable and ancient citizen of Florence, of the gate of San Piero, and our neighbor.» «He was a great master in almost every branch of knowledge, although he was a layman; he was a supreme poet and philosopher, and a perfect rhetorician alike in prose and verse, as well as a most noble orator in public speech, supreme in rhyme, with the most polished and beautiful style that had ever been in our language. . . . Because of his knowledge he was somewhat presumptuous, disdainful, and haughty; and, as it were after the manner of a philosopher, having little graciousness, he knew not well to bear himself with common people (*conversare con laici*).»

Dante was born in Florence, in May or June 1265. Of his family little is positively known.* It was not among the nobles of the city, but it had place among the well-to-do citizens who formed the body of the State and the main support of the Guelf party. Of Dante's early years, and the course of his education, nothing is known save what he himself tells us in his various writings or what may be inferred from them. Lionardo Bruni, eminent as an historian and as a public man, who wrote a Life of Dante about a hundred years after his death, cites a letter of which we have no other knowledge, in which, if the letter be genuine, the poet says that he took part in the battle of Campaldino, fought in June 1289. The words are:—« At the battle of Campaldino, in which the Ghibelline party was almost all slain and undone, I found myself not a child in arms, and I experienced great fear, and finally the greatest joy, because of the shifting fortunes of the fight.» It seems likely that Dante was present, probably under arms, in the later part of the same summer, at the surrender to the Florentines of the Pisan stronghold of Caprona, where, he says (‹Inferno,› xxi. 94–96), « I saw the foot soldiers afraid, who came out under compact from Caprona, seeing themselves among so many enemies.»

Years passed before any other event in Dante's life is noted with a certain date. An imperfect record preserved in the Florentine archives mentions his taking part in a discussion in the so-called Council of a Hundred Men, on the 5th of June, 1296. This is of importance as indicating that he had before this time become a member of one of the twelve Arts,—enrollment in one of which was required for the acquisition of the right to exercise political functions in the State,—and also as indicating that he had a place in the chief of those councils by which public measures were discussed and decided. The Art of which he was a member was that of the physicians and druggists (*medici e speziali*), an Art whose dealings included commerce in many of the products of the East.

Not far from this time, but whether before or after 1296 is uncertain, he married. His wife was Gemma dei Donati. The Donati were a powerful family among the *grandi* of the city, and played a leading part in the stormy life of Florence. Of Gemma nothing is known but her marriage.

Between 1297 and 1299, Dante, together with his brother Francesco, as appears from existing documentary evidence, were borrowers of considerable sums of money; and the largest of the debts thus incurred seem not to have been discharged till 1332, eleven years after his death, when they were paid by his sons Jacopo and Pietro.

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*In the ‹Paradiso› (canto xv.) he introduces his great-great-grandfather Cacciaguida, who tells of himself that he followed the Emperor Conrad to fight against the Mohammedans, was made a knight by him, and was slain in the war.

In May 1299 he was sent as envoy from Florence to the little, not very distant, city of San Gemignano, to urge its community to take part in a general council of the Guelf communes of Tuscany.

In the next year, 1300, he was elected one of the six priors of Florence, to hold office from the 15th of June to the 15th of August. The priors, together with the «gonfalonier of justice» (who had command of the body of one thousand men who stood at their service), formed the chief magistracy of the city. Florence had such jealousy of its rulers that the priors held office but two months, so that in the course of each year thirty-six of the citizens were elected to this magistracy. The outgoing priors, associated with twelve of the leading citizens, two from each of the *sestieri* or wards of the city, chose their successors. Neither continuity nor steady vigor of policy was possible with an administration so shifting and of such varied composition, which by its very constitution was exposed at all times to intrigue and to attack. It was no wonder that Florence lay open to the reproach that her counsels were such that what she spun in October did not reach to mid-November ('Purgatory,' vi. 142–144). His election to the priorate was the most important event in Dante's public life. «All my ills and all my troubles,» he declared, «had occasion and beginning from my misfortunate election to the priorate, of which, though I was not worthy in respect of wisdom, yet I was not unworthy in fidelity and in age.»*

The year 1300 was disastrous not only for Dante but for Florence. She was, at the end of the thirteenth century, by far the most flourishing and powerful city of Tuscany, full of vitality and energy, and beautiful as she was strong. She was not free from civil discord, but the predominance of the Guelf party was so complete within her walls that she suffered little from the strife between Guelf and Ghibelline, which for almost a century had divided Italy into two hostile camps. In the main the Guelf party was that of the common people and the industrious classes, and in general it afforded support to the Papacy as against the Empire, while it received, in return, support from the popes. The Ghibellines, on the other hand, were mainly of the noble class, and maintainers of the Empire. The growth of the industry and commerce of Florence in the last half of the century had resulted in the establishment of the popular power, and in the suppression of the Ghibelline interest. But a bitter quarrel broke out in one of the great families in the neighboring Guelf city of Pistoia, a quarrel which raged so furiously that Florence feared that it would result in the gain of power by the Ghibellines, and she adopted the fatal policy of compelling the heads of the contending factions to take up their residence within her walls. The result was that she herself became the seat of discord. Each of the two factions found ardent adherents, and, adopting the names by which they had been distinguished in Pistoia, Florence was almost instantly ablaze with the passionate quarrel between the Whites and the Blacks (Bianchi and Neri). The flames burned so high that the Pope, Boniface VIII., intervened to quench them. His intervention was vain.

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* From the letter already referred to, cited by Lionardo Bruni.

It was just at this time that Dante became prior. The need of action to restore peace to the city was imperative, and the priors took the step of banishing the leaders of both divisions. Among those of the Bianchi was Dante's own nearest friend, Guido Cavalcante. The measure was insufficient to secure tranquillity and order. The city was in constant tumult; its conditions went from bad to worse. But in spite of civil broils, common affairs must still be attended to, and from a document preserved in the Archives at Florence we learn that on the 28th April, 1301, Dante was appointed superintendent, without salary, of works undertaken for the widening, straightening, and paving of the street of San Procolo and making it safe for travel. On the 13th of the same month he took part in a discussion, in the Council of the Heads of the twelve greater Arts, as to the mode of procedure in the election of future priors. On the 18th of June, in the Council of the Hundred Men, he advised against providing the Pope with a force of one hundred men which had been asked for; and again in September of the same year there is record, for the last time, of his taking part in the Council, in a discussion in regard "to the conservation of the Ordinances of Justice and the Statutes of the People."

These notices of the part taken by Dante in public affairs seem at first sight comparatively slight and unimportant; but were one constructing an ideal biography of him, it would be hard to devise records more appropriate to the character and principles of the man as they appear from his writings. The sense of the duty of the individual to the community of which he forms a part was one of his strongest convictions; and his being put in charge of the opening of the street of San Procolo, and making it safe for travel, "eo quod popularis comitatus absque strepitu et briga magnatum et potentum possunt secure venire ad dominos priores et vexilliferum justitiæ cum expedit" (so that the common people may, without uproar and harassing of magnates and mighty men, have access whenever it be desirable to the Lord Priors and the Standard-Bearer of Justice), affords a comment on his own criticism of his fellow-citizens, whose disposition to shirk the burden of public duty is more than once the subject of his satire. «Many refuse the common burden, but thy people, my Florence, eagerly replies without being called on, and cries, 'I load myself'» ('Purgatory,' vi. 133–135). His counsel against providing the Pope with troops was in conformity with his fixed political conviction that the function of the Papacy was to be confined to the spiritual government of mankind; and nothing could be more striking, as a chance incident, than that the last occasion on which he, whose heart was set on justice, took part in the counsels of his city, should have been for the discussion of the means for «the conservation of the ordinances of justice and the statutes of the people.»

In the course of events in 1300 and 1301 the Bianchi proved the stronger of the two factions by which the city was divided, they resisted with success the efforts of the Pope in support of their rivals, and they were charged by their enemies with intent to restore the rule of the city to the Ghibellines. While affairs were in this state, Charles of Valois, brother to the King of France, Philip the Fair, was passing through Italy with a troop of horsemen to join Charles II. of Naples,* in the attempt to regain Sicily from the hands of Frederic of Aragon. The Pope favored the expedition, and held out flattering promises to Charles. The latter reached Anagni, where Boniface was residing, in September 1301. Here it was arranged that before proceeding to Sicily, Charles should undertake to reduce to obedience the refractory opponents of the Pope in Tuscany. The title of the Pacifier of Tuscany was bestowed on him, and he moved toward Florence with his own troop and a considerable additional force of men-at-arms. He was met on his way by deputies from Florence, to whom he made fair promises; and trusting to his good faith, the Florentines opened their gates to him and he entered the city on All Saints' Day (November 1st), 1301.

Charles had hardly established himself in his quarters before he cast his pledges to the wind. The exiled Neri, with his connivance, broke into the city, and for six days worked their will upon their enemies, slaying many of them, pillaging and burning their houses, while Charles looked on with apparent unconcern at the wide-spread ruin and devastation. New priors, all of them from the party of the Neri, entered upon office in mid-November, and a new Podestà, Cante dei Gabrielli of Agobbio, was charged with the administration of justice. The persecution of the Bianchi was carried on with consistent thoroughness: many were imprisoned, many fined, Charles sharing in the sums exacted from them. On the 27th of January, 1302, a decree was issued by the Podestà condemning five persons, one of whom was Dante, to fine and banishment on account of crimes alleged to have been committed by them while holding office as priors. «According to public report,» said the decree, «they committed barratry, sought illicit gains, and practiced unjust extortions of money or goods.» These general charges are set forth with elaborate legal phraseology, and with much repetition of phrase, but without statement of specific instances. The most important of them are that the accused had spent money of the commune in opposing the Pope, in resistance to the còming of Charles of Valois, and against the peace of the city and the Guelf party; that they had promoted discord in the city of Pistoia, and had caused the expulsion from that city of the Neri, the faithful adherents of the Holy Roman Church; and that they had caused Pistoia to break its union with Florence, and to refuse subjection to the Church and to Charles the Pacificator of Tuscany. These being the charges, the decree proceeded to declare that the accused, having been summoned to appear within a fixed time before the Podestà and his court to make their defense, under penalty for non-appearance of five thousand florins each, and having failed to do so, were now condemned to pay this sum and to restore their illicit gains; and if this were not done within three days from the publication of this sentence against them, all their possessions (*bona*) should be seized and destroyed; and should they make the required payment, they were nevertheless to stand banished from Tuscany for two years; and for perpetual memory of their misdeeds their names were to be inscribed in the Statutes of the People, and as swindlers and barrators they were never to hold office or benefice within the city or district of Florence.

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*Charles II. of Naples was the cousin of Philip III., the Bold, of France, the father of Charles of Valois; and in 1290 Charles of Valois had married his daughter.

Six weeks later, on the 10th of March, another decree of the Podestà was published, declaring the five citizens named in the preceding decree, together with ten others, to have practically confessed their guilt by their contumacy in non-appearance when summoned, and condemning them, if at any time any one of them should come into the power of Florence, to be burned to death («talis perveniens igne comburatur sic quod moriatur»).*

From this time forth till his death Dante was an exile. The character of the decrees is such that the charges brought against him have no force, and leave no suspicion resting upon his actions as an officer of the State. They are the outcome and expression of the bitterness of party rage, and they testify clearly only to his having been one of the leaders of the parties opposed to the pretensions of the Pope, and desirous to maintain the freedom of Florence from foreign intervention.

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*These decrees and the other public documents relating to Dante are to be found in various publications. They have all been collected and edited by Professor George R. Carpenter, in the tenth and eleventh Annual Reports of the Dante Society, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1891, 1892.

In April Charles left Florence, «having finished,» says Villani, the eye-witness of these events, «that for which he had come, namely, under pretext of peace, having driven the White party from Florence; but from this proceeded many calamities and dangers to our city.»

The course of Dante's external life in exile is hardly less obscure than that of his early days. Much concerning it may be inferred with some degree of probability from passages in his own writings, or from what is reported by others; but of actual certain facts there are few. For a time he seems to have remained with his companions in exile, of whom there were hundreds, but he soon separated himself from them in grave dissatisfaction, making a party by himself ('Paradiso,' xvii. 69), and found shelter at the court of the Scaligeri at Verona. In August 1306 he was among the witnesses to a contract at Padua. In October of the same year he was with Franceschino, Marchese Malespina, in the district called the Lunigiana, and empowered by him as his special procurator and envoy to establish the terms of peace for him and his brothers with the Bishop of Luni. His gratitude to the Malespini for their hospitality and good-will toward him is proved by one of the most splendid compliments ever paid in verse or prose, the magnificent eulogium of this great and powerful house with which the eighth canto of the 'Purgatory' closes. How long Dante remained with the Malespini, and whither he went after leaving them, is unknown. At some period of his exile he was at Lucca ('Purgatorio,' xxiv. 45); Villani states that he was at Bologna, and afterwards at Paris, and in many parts of the world. He wandered far and wide in Italy, and it may well be that in the course of his years of exile he went to Paris, drawn thither by the opportunities of learning which the University afforded; but nothing is known definitely of his going.

In 1311 the mists which obscure the greater part of Dante's life in exile are dispelled for a moment, by three letters of unquestioned authenticity, and we gain a clear view of the poet. In 1310 Henry of Luxemburg, a man who touched the imagination of his contemporaries by his striking presence and chivalric accomplishments as well as by his high character and generous aims, «a man just, religious, and strenuous in arms,» having been elected Emperor, as Henry VII., prepared to enter Italy, with intent to confirm the imperial rights and to restore order to the distracted land. The Pope, Clement V., favored his coming, and the prospect opened by it was hailed not only by the Ghibellines with joy, but by a large part of the Guelfs as well; with the hope that the long discord and confusion, from which all had suffered, might be brought to end and give place to tranquillity and justice. Dante exulted in this new hope; and on the coming of the Emperor, late in 1310, he addressed an animated appeal to the rulers and people of Italy, exhorting them in impassioned words to rise up and do reverence to him whom the Lord of heaven and earth had ordained for their king. «Behold, now is the accepted time; rejoice, O Italy, dry thy tears; efface, O most beautiful, the traces of mourning; for he is at hand who shall deliver thee.»

The first welcome of Henry was ardent, and with fair auspices he assumed at Milan, in January 1311, the Iron Crown, the crown of the King of Italy. Here at Milan Dante presented himself, and here with full heart he did homage upon his knees to the Emperor. But the popular welcome proved hollow; the illusions of hope speedily began to vanish; revolt broke out in many cities of Lombardy; Florence remained obdurate, and with great preparations for resistance put herself at the head of the enemies of the Emperor. Dante, disappointed and indignant, could not keep silence. He wrote a letter headed «Dante Alaghieri, a Florentine and undeservedly in exile, to the most wicked Florentines within the city.» It begins with calm and eloquent words in regard to the divine foundation of the imperial power, and to the sufferings of Italy due to her having been left without its control to her own undivided will. Then it breaks forth in passionate denunciation of Florence for her impious arrogance in venturing to rise up in mad rebellion against the minister of God; and, warning her of the calamities which her blind obstinacy is preparing for her, it closes with threats of her impending ruin and desolation. This letter is dated from the springs of the Arno, on the 31st of March.

The growing force of the opposition which he encountered delayed the progress of Henry. Dante, impatient of delay, eager to see the accomplishment of his hope, on the 16th of April addressed Henry himself in a letter of exalted prophetic exhortation, full of Biblical language, and of illustrations drawn from sacred and profane story, urging him not to tarry, but trusting in God, to go out to meet and to slay the Goliath that stood against him. «Then the Philistines will flee, and Israel will be delivered, and we, exiles in Babylon, who groan as we remember the holy Jerusalem, shall then, as citizens breathing in peace, recall in joy the miseries of confusion.» But all was in vain. The drama which had opened with such brilliant expectations was advancing to a tragic close. Italy became more confused and distracted than ever. One sad event followed after another. In May the brother of the Emperor fell at the siege of Brescia; in September his dearly loved wife Margarita, «a holy and good woman,» died at Genoa. The forces hostile to him grew more and more formidable. He succeeded however in entering Rome in May 1312, but his enemies held half of the city, and the streets became the scene of bloody battles; St. Peter's was closed to him, and Henry, worn and disheartened and in peril, was compelled to submit to be ingloriously crowned at St. John Lateran. With diminished strength and with loss of influence he withdrew to Tuscany, and laid ineffectual siege to Florence. Month after month dragged along with miserable continuance of futile war. In the summer of 1313, collecting all his forces, Henry prepared to move southward against the King of Naples. But he was seized with illness, and on the 24th of August he died at Buonconvento, not far from Siena. With his death died the hope of union and of peace for Italy. His work, undertaken with high purpose and courage, had wholly failed. He had come to set Italy straight before she was ready ('Paradiso,' xxxi. 137). The clouds darkened over her. For Dante the cup of bitterness overflowed.

How Dante was busied, where he was abiding, during the last two years of Henry's stay in Italy, we have no knowledge. One striking fact relating to him is all that is recorded. In the summer of 1311 the Guelfs in Florence, in order to strengthen themselves against the Emperor, determined to relieve from ban and to recall from exile many of their banished fellow-citizens, confident that on returning home they would strengthen the city in its resistance against the Emperor. But to the general amnesty which was issued on the 2d of September there were large exceptions; and impressive evidence of the multitude of the exiles is afforded by the fact that more than a thousand were expressly excluded from the benefit of pardon, and were to remain banished and condemned as before. In the list of those thus still regarded as enemies of Florence stands the name of Dante.

The death of the Emperor was followed eight months later by that of the Pope, Clement V., under whom the papal throne had been removed from Rome to Avignon. There seemed a chance, if but feeble, that a new pope might restore the Church to the city which was its proper home, and thus at least one of the wounds of Italy be healed. The Conclave was bitterly divided; month after month went by without a choice, the fate of the Church and of Italy hanging uncertain in the balance. Dante, in whom religion and patriotism combined as a single passion, saw with grief that the return of the Church to Italy was likely to be lost through the selfishness, the jealousies, and the avarice of her chief prelates;

and under the impulse of the deepest feeling he addressed a letter of remonstrance, reproach, and exhortation to the Italian cardinals, who formed but a small minority in the Conclave, but who might by union and persistence still secure the election of a pope favorable to the return. This letter is full of a noble but too vehement zeal. «It is for you, being one at heart, to fight manfully for the Bride of Christ; for the seat of the Bride, which is Rome; for our Italy, and in a word, for the whole commonwealth of pilgrims upon earth.» But words were in vain; and after a struggle kept up for two years and three months, a pope was at last elected who was to fix the seat of the Papacy only the more firmly at Avignon. Once more Dante had to bear the pain of disappointment of hopes in which selfishness had no part.

And now for years he disappears from sight. What his life was he tells in a most touching passage near the beginning of his 'Convito':—«From the time when it pleased the citizens of Florence, the fairest and most famous daughter of Rome, to cast me out from her sweetest bosom (in which I had been born and nourished even to the summit of my life, and in which, at good peace with them, I desire with all my heart to repose my weary soul, and to end the time which is allotted to me), through almost all the regions to which our tongue extends I have gone a pilgrim, almost a beggar, displaying against my will the wound of fortune, which is wont often to be imputed unjustly to [the discredit of] him who is wounded. Truly I have been a bark without sail and without rudder, borne to divers ports and bays and shores by that dry wind which grievous poverty breathes forth, and I have appeared mean in the eyes of many who perchance, through some report, had imagined me in other form; and not only has my person been lowered in their sight, but every work of mine, whether done or to be done, has been held in less esteem.»

Once more, and for the last time, during these wanderings he heard the voice of Florence addressed to him, and still in anger. A decree was issued* on the 6th of November, 1315, renewing the condemnation and banishment of numerous citizens, denounced as Ghibellines and rebels, including among them Dante Aldighieri and his sons. The persons named in this decree are charged with contumacy, and with the commission of ill deeds against the good state of the Commune of Florence and the Guelf party; and it is ordered that «if any of them shall fall into the power of the Commune he shall be taken to the place of Justice and there be beheaded.» The motive is unknown which led to the inclusion in this decree of the sons of Dante, of whom there were two, now youths respectively a little more or a little less than twenty years old.*

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*This decree was pronounced in a General Council of the Commune by the Vicar of King Robert of Naples, into whose hands the Florentines had given themselves in 1313 for a term of five years,—extended afterwards to eight,—with the hope that by his authority order might be preserved within the city.

It is probable that the last years of Dante's life were passed in Ravenna, under the protection of Guido da Polenta, lord of the city. It was here that he died, on September 14th, 1321. His two sons were with him, and probably also his daughter Beatrice. He was in his fifty-seventh year when he went from suffering and from exile to peace ('Paradiso,' x. 128).

Such are the few absolute facts known concerning the external events of Dante's life. A multitude of statements, often with much circumstantial detail, concerning other incidents, have been made by his biographers; a few rest upon a foundation of probability, but the mass are guess-work. There is no need to report them; for small as the sum of our actual knowledge is, it is enough for defining the field within which his spiritual life was enacted, and for showing the conditions under which his work was done, and by which its character was largely determined.

III

No poet has recorded his own inner life more fully or with greater sincerity than Dante. All his more important writings have essentially the character of a spiritual autobiography, extending from his boyhood to his latest years. Their quality and worth as works of literature are largely dependent upon their quality and interest as revelations of the nature of their writer. Their main significance lies in this double character.

The earliest of them is the 'Vita Nuova,' or New Life. It is the narrative in prose and verse of the beginning and course of the love which made life new for him in his youth, and which became the permanent inspiration of his later years, and the bond of union for him between earth and heaven, between the actual and the ideal, between the human and the divine. The little book begins with an account of the boy's first meeting, when he was nine years old, with a little maiden about a year younger, who so touched his heart that from that time forward Love lorded it over his soul. She was called Beatrice; but whether this was her true name, or whether, because of its significance of blessing, it was assigned to her as appropriate to her nature, is left in doubt. Who her parents were, and what were the events of her life, are also uncertain; though Boccaccio, who, some thirty years after Dante's death, wrote a biography of the poet in which fact and fancy are inextricably intermingled, reports that he had it upon good authority that she was the daughter of Folco Portinari, and became the wife of Simone de' Bardi. So far as Dante's relation to her is concerned, these matters are of no concern. Just nine years after their first meeting, years during which Dante says he had often seen her, and her image had stayed constantly with him, the lady of his love saluted him with such virtue that he seemed to see all the bounds of bliss, and having already recognized in himself the art of discoursing in rhyme, he made a sonnet in which he set forth a vision which had come to him after receiving his lady's salute. This sonnet has a twofold interest, as being the earliest of Dante's poetic composition preserved to us, and as describing a vision which connects it in motive with the vision of the ‹Divine Comedy.› It is the poem of a 'prentice hand not yet master of its craft, and neither in manner nor in conception has it any marked distinction from the work of his predecessors and contemporaries. The narrative of the first incidents of his love forms the subject of the first part of the little book, consisting of ten poems and the prose comment upon them; then the poet takes up a new theme and devotes ten poems to the praise of his lady. The last of them is interrupted by her death, which took place on the 9th of June, 1290, when Dante was twenty-five years old. Then he takes up another new theme, and the next ten poems are devoted to his grief, to an episode of temporary unfaithfulness to the memory of Beatrice, and to the revival of fidelity of love for her. One poem, the last, remains; in which he tells how a sigh, issuing from his heart, and guided by Love, beholds his lady in glory in the empyrean. The book closes with these words:—

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*Among the letters ascribed to Dante is one, much noted, in reply to a letter from a friend in Florence, in regard to terms of absolution on which he might secure his re-admission to Florence. It is of very doubtful authenticity. It has no external evidence to support it, and the internal evidence of its rhetorical form and sentimental tone is all against it. It belongs in the same class with the famous letter of Fra Ilario, and like that, seems not unlikely to have been an invention of Boccaccio's.

> «After this sonnet a wonderful vision appeared to me, in which I saw things which made me resolve to speak no more of this blessed one until I could more worthily treat of her. And to attain to this, I study to the utmost of my power, as she truly knows. So that, if it shall please Him through whom all things live that my life be prolonged for some years, I hope to say of her what was never said of any woman. And then, may it please Him who is the Lord of Grace, that my soul may go to behold the glory of its lady, namely of that blessed Beatrice, who in glory looks upon the face of Him *qui est per omnia sæcula benedictus*» (who is blessed forever).

There is nothing in the ‹New Life› which indicates whether or not Beatrice was married, or which implies that the devotion of Dante to her was recognized by any special expression of regard on her part. No interviews between them are recorded; no tokens of love were exchanged. The reserve, the simple and unconscious dignity of Beatrice, distinguish her no less than her beauty, her grace, and her ineffable courtesy. The story, based upon actual experience, is ordered not in literal conformity with fact, but according to the ideal of the imagination; and its reality does not consist in the exactness of its record of events, but in the truth of its poetic conception. Under the narrative lies an allegory of the power of love to transfigure earthly things into the likeness of heavenly, and to lift the soul from things material and transitory to things spiritual and eternal.

While the little book exhibits many features of a literature in an early stage of development, and many of the characteristics of a youthful production, it is yet the first book of modern times which has such quality as to possess perpetual contemporaneousness. It has become in part archaic, but it does not become antiquated. It is the first book in a modern tongue in which prose begins to have freedom of structure, and ease of control over the resources of the language. It shows a steady progress in Dante's mastery of literary art. The stiffness and lack of rhythmical charm of the poems with which it begins disappear in the later sonnets and canzoni, and before its close it exhibits the full development of the sweet new style begun by Dante's predecessor Guido Guinicelli, and of which the secret lay in obedience to the dictates of nature within the heart.

The date of its compilation cannot be fixed with precision, but was probably not far from 1295; and the words with which it closes seem to indicate that the design of the ‹Divine Comedy› had already taken a more or less definite shape in Dante's mind.

The deepest interest of the ‹New Life› is the evidence which it affords in regard to Dante's character. The tenderness, sensitiveness, and delicacy of feeling, the depth of passion, the purity of soul which are manifest in it, leave no question as to the controlling qualities of his disposition. These qualities rest upon a foundation of manliness, and are buttressed by strong moral principles. At the very beginning of the book is a sentence, which shows that he had already gained that self-control which is the prime condition of strength and worth of character. In speaking of the power which his imagination gave to Love to rule over him, a power that had its source in the image of his lady, he adds, «Yet was that image of such noble virtue that it never suffered Love to rule me without the faithful counsel of the reason in those matters in which to listen to its counsel was useful.» His faculties were already disciplined by study, and his gifts enriched with learning. He was scholar hardly less than poet. The range of his acquisitions was already wide, and it is plain that he had had the best instruction which Florence could provide; and nowhere else could better have been found.

The death of Beatrice was the beginning of a new period of Dante's self-development. So long as she lived she had led him along toward the right way. For a time, during the first ecstasy of grief at her loss, she still sustained him. After a while, he tells us, his mind, which was endeavoring to heal itself, sought for comfort in the mode which other comfortless ones had accepted for their consolation. He read Boëthius on the 'Consolations of Philosophy,' and the words of comfort in Cicero's 'Treatise on Friendship.' By these he was led to further studies of philosophy, and giving himself with ardor to its pursuit, he devoted himself to the acquisition of the wisdom of this earth, to the neglect, for a time, of the teachings of Divine revelation. He entered upon paths of study which did not lead to the higher truth, and at the same time he began to take active part himself in the affairs of the world. He was attracted by the allurements of life. He married; he took office. He shared in the pleasures of the day. He no longer listened to the voice of the spirit, nor was faithful to the image of Beatrice in following on earth the way which should lead him to her in heaven. But meanwhile he wrote verses which under the form of poems of love were celebrations of the beauty of Philosophy; and he was accomplishing himself in learning till he became master of all the erudition of his time; he was meditating deeply on politics, he was studying life even more than books, he was becoming one of the deepest of thinkers and one of the most accomplished of literary artists. But his life was of the world, worldly, and it did not satisfy him. At last a change came. He suddenly awoke to consciousness of how far he had strayed from that good of which Beatrice was the type; how basely he had deserted the true ideals of his youth; how perilous was the life of the world; how near he was to the loss of the hope of salvation. We know not fully how this change was wrought. All we know concerning it is to be gathered from passages in his later works, in which, as in the 'Convito,' he explains the allegorical significance of some of his poems, or as in the 'Divine Comedy,' he gives poetic form to his experience as it had shaped itself in his imagination. There are often difficulties in the interpretation of his words, nor are all his statements reconcilable with each other in detail. But I believe that in what I have set forth as the course of his life between the death of Beatrice and his exile, I have stated nothing which may not be confirmed by Dante's own testimony.

It is possible that during the latter part of this period Dante wrote the treatise ‘On Monarchy,’ in which he set forth his views as to the government of mankind. To ascertain the date of its composition is both less easy and less important than in the case of his other long works; because it contains few personal references, and no indications of the immediate conditions under which it was written. But it is of importance not only as an exposition of Dante's political theories and the broad principles upon which those theories rested, but still more as exhibiting his high ideals in regard to the order of society and the government of mankind. Its main doctrine might be called that of ideal Ghibellinism; and though its arguments are often unsound, and based upon fanciful propositions and incorrect analogies, though it exhibits the defects frequent in the reasoning of the time,—a lack of discrimination in regard to the value of authorities, and no sense of the true nature of evidence,—yet the spirit with which it is animated is so generous, and its object of such importance, that it possesses interest alike as an illustration of Dante's character, and as a monument in the history of political speculation.

Its purpose was, first, to establish the proposition that the empire, or supreme universal temporal monarchy, was necessary for the good order of the world; secondly, that the Roman people had rightfully attained the dignity of this empire; and thirdly, that the authority thus obtained was derived immediately from God, and was not dependent on any earthly agent or vicar of God. The discussion of the first proposition is the most interesting part of the treatise, for it involves the statement of Dante's general conception of the end of government and of the true political order. His argument begins with the striking assertion that the proper work of the human race, taken as a whole, is to bring into activity all the possibilities of the intelligence, first to the end of speculation, and secondly in the application of speculation to action. He goes on to declare that this can be achieved only in a state of peace; that peace is only to be secured under the rule of one supreme monarch; that thus the government of the earth is brought into correspondence with the Divine government of the universe; and that only under a universal supreme monarchy can justice be fully established and complete liberty enjoyed. The arguments to maintain these theses are ingenious, and in some instances forcible; but are too abstract, and too disregardful of the actual conditions of society. Dante's loftiness of view, his fine ideal of the possibilities of human life, and his ardent desire to improve its actual conditions, are manifest throughout, and give value to the little book as a treatise of morals beyond that which it possesses as a manual of practical politics.

There is little in the ‘De Monarchia’ which reflects the heat of the great secular debate between Guelf and Ghibelline; but something of the passion engendered by it finds expression in the opening of the third book, where Dante, after citing the words of the prophet Daniel, «He hath shut the lions’ mouths and they have not hurt me, forasmuch as before him justice was found in me,» goes on in substance as follows:—

> «The truth concerning the matter which remains to be treated may perchance arouse indignation against me. But since Truth from her changeless throne appeals to me, and Solomon teaches us ‘to meditate on truth, and to hate the wicked,’ and the philosopher [Aristotle], our instructor in morals, urges us for the sake of truth to disregard what is dear to us, I, taking confidence from the words of Daniel in which the Divine power is declared to be the shield of the defenders of the truth, . . . will enter on the present contest; and by the arm of Him who by his blood delivered us from the power of darkness, I will drive out from the lists the impious and the liar. Wherefore should I fear? since the Spirit, co-eternal with the Father and the Son, says through the mouth of David, ‘The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance, he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.’»

These words perhaps justify the inference that the treatise was written before his exile, since after it his experience of calamity would have freed him from the anticipation of further evil from the hostility of those to whom his doctrine might be unacceptable.

But whether or not this be a correct inference, there can be no doubt that the years between the compilation of the ‘New Life’ and his banishment were years of rapid maturity of his powers, and largely devoted to the studies which made him a master in the field of learning. Keenly observant of the aspects of contemporary life, fascinated by the «immense and magic spectacle of human affairs,» questioning deeply its significance, engaged actively in practical concerns, he ardently sought for the solution of the mysteries and the reconcilement of the confusions of human existence. The way to this solution seemed to lie through philosophy and learning, and in acquiring them he lifted himself above the turmoil of earth. All observation, experience, and acquisition served as material for his poetic and idealizing imagination, wherewith to construct an orderly scheme of the universe; all served for the defining and confirming of his moral judgments, all worked together for the harmonious development of his intellectual powers; all served to prepare him for the work which, already beginning to shape itself in his mind, was to become the main occupation of the remainder of his life, and to prove one of the abiding monuments of the highest achievements of mankind.

The ‘De Monarchia’ is written in Latin, and so also is a brief unfinished treatise, the work of some period during his exile, on the

Common Speech, ‹De Vulgari Eloquio.› It has intrinsic interest as the first critical study of language and of literature in modern times, as well as from the acute and sound judgments with which it abounds, and from its discussion of the various forms and topics of poetry, but still more from its numerous illustrations of Dante's personal experience and sentiment. Its object is to teach the right use of the common speech; instruction required by all, since all make use of the speech, it being that which all learn from birth, «by imitation and without rule. The other speech, which the Romans called *Grammatica*, is learned by study and according to rule. . . . Of these two the Common is the more noble, because it was the first used by the human race, and also because it is in use over all the world, though in different tongues; and again because it is natural to us, while the other is artificial.» Speech, Dante declares, is the prerogative of man alone, not required by the angels and not possible for brutes; there was originally but one language, the Hebrew. In treating of this latter topic Dante introduces a personal reference of extraordinary interest in its bearing on his feeling in respect to his exile:—

> «It is for those of such debased intelligence that they believe the place of their birth to be the most delightful under the sun, to prefer their own peculiar tongue, and to believe that it was that of Adam. But we whose country is the world, as the sea is for fishes, although we drank of the Arno before we were weaned, and so love Florence that because we loved it we suffer exile unjustly, support our judgment by reason rather than feeling. And though in respect to our pleasure and the repose of our senses, no sweeter place exists on earth than Florence, . . . yet we hold it for certain that there are many more delightful regions and cities than Tuscany and Florence, where I was born and of which I am a citizen, and that many nations and people use a more pleasing and serviceable speech than the Italians.»

The conclusion of this speculation is, that the Hebrew, which was the original language spoken by Adam, was preserved by the Hebrew people after the confusion of tongues at the building of the Tower of Babel, and thus became the language used by our Redeemer,—the language not of confusion but of grace.

But the purpose of the present treatise is not to consider all the divers languages even of Europe, but only that of Italy. Yet in Italy alone there is an immense variety of speech, and no one of the varieties is the true Italian language. That true, illustrious, courtly tongue is to be found nowhere in common use, but everywhere in select usage. It is the common speech «freed from rude words, involved constructions, defective pronunciation, and rustic accent; excellent, clear, perfect, urbane, and elect, as it may be seen in the poems of 'Cino da Pistoia and his friend,'»—that friend being Dante himself. They have attained to the glory of the tongue, and «how glorious truly it renders its servants we ourselves know, who to the sweetness of its glory hold our exile as naught.»* This illustrious language, then, is the select Italian tongue, the tongue of the excellent poets in every part of Italy; and how and by whom it is to be used it is the purpose of this treatise to show.

The second book begins with the doctrine that the best speech is appropriate to the best conceptions; but the best conceptions exist only where there is learning and genius, and the best speech is consequently that only of those who possess them, and only the best subjects are worthy of being treated in it. These subjects fall under three heads: that of utility, or safety, which it is the object of arms to secure; that of delight, which is the end of love; that of worthiness, which is attained by virtue. These are the topics of the illustrious poets in the vulgar tongue; and of these, among the Italians, Cino da Pistoia has treated of love, and his friend (Dante) of rectitude.

The remainder of the second book is given to the various forms of poetry,—the canzone, the ballata, the sonnet,—and to the rules of versification. The work breaks off unfinished, in the middle of a sentence. There were to have been at least two books more; but, fragment as it is, the treatise is an invaluable document in the illustration of Dante's study of his own art, in its exhibition of his breadth of view, and in its testimony to his own consciousness of his position as the master of his native tongue, and as the poet of righteousness. He failed in his estimate of himself only as it fell short of the truth. He found the common tongue of Italy unformed, unstable, limited in powers of expression. He shaped it not only for his own needs, but for the needs of the Italian race. He developed its latent powers, enlarged its resources, and determined its form. The language as he used it is essentially the language of to-day,—not less so than the language of Shakespeare is the English of our use. In his poetic diction there is little that is not in accord with later usage; and while in prose the language has become more flexible, its constructions more varied and complex, its rhythm more perfected, his prose style at its best still remains unsurpassed in vigor, in directness, and in simplicity. Changeful from generation to generation as language is, and as Dante recognized it to be, it has not so changed in six hundred years that his tongue has become strange. There is no similar example in any other modern literature. The force of his genius, which thus gave to the form of his work a perpetual contemporaneousness, gave it also to the substance; and though the intellectual convictions of men have changed far more than their language, yet Dante's position as the poet of righteousness remains supreme.

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* *Literally*, «who by the sweetness of its glory put exile behind our back.»

It is surprising that with such a vast and difficult work as the 'Divine Comedy' engaging him, Dante should have found time and strength during his exile for the writing of treatises in prose so considerable as that on the Common Tongue, and the much longer and more important book which he called 'Il Convivio' or 'Il Convito' (The Banquet). It is apparent from various references in the course of the work that it was at least mainly written between 1307 and 1310. Its design was of large scope. It was to be composed of fifteen parts or treatises; but of these only four were completed, and such is their character both as regards their exhibition of the poet's nature and their exposition of the multifarious topics of philosophy, of science, and of morals treated in them, that the student of Dante and of mediæval thought cannot but feel a deep regret at the failure of the poet to carry his undertaking to its intended close. But though the work is imperfect as a whole, each of its four parts is complete and practically independent in itself.

Dante's object in the book was twofold. His opening words are a translation of what Matthew Arnold calls «that buoyant and immortal sentence with which Aristotle begins his Metaphysics,»—«All mankind naturally desire knowledge.» But few can attain to what is desired by all, and innumerable are they who live always famished for want of this food. «Oh, blessed are the few who sit at that table where the bread of the angels is eaten, and wretched they who have food in common with the herds.» «I, therefore, who do not sit at the blessed table, but having fled from the pasture of the crowd, gather up at the feet of those who sit at it what falls from them, and through the sweetness I taste in that which little by little I pick up, know the wretched life of those whom I have left behind me, and moved with pity for them, not forgetting myself, have reserved something for these wretched ones.» These crumbs were the substance of the banquet which he proposed to spread for them. It was to have fourteen courses, and each of these courses was to have for its principal viand a canzone of which the subject should be Love and Virtue, and the bread served with each course was to be the exposition of these poems,—poems which for want of this exposition lay under the shadow of obscurity, so that by many their beauty was more esteemed than their goodness. They were in appearance mere poems of love, but under this aspect they concealed their true meaning, for the lady of his love was none other than Philosophy herself, and not sensual passion but virtue was their moving cause. The fear of reproach to which this misinterpretation might give occasion, and the desire to impart teaching which others could not give, were the two motives of his work.

There is much in the method and style of the ‹Convito› which in its cumbrous artificiality exhibits an early stage in the exposition of thought in literary form, but Dante's earnestness of purpose is apparent in many passages of manly simplicity, and inspires life into the dry bones of his formal scholasticism. The book is a mingling of biographical narrative, shaped largely by the ideals of the imagination, with expositions of philosophical doctrine, disquisitions on matters of science, and discussion of moral truths. But one controlling purpose runs through all, to help men to attain that knowledge which shall lead them into the paths of righteousness.

For his theory of knowledge is, that it is the natural and innate desire of the soul, as essential to its own perfection in its ultimate union with God. The use of the reason, through which he partakes of the Divine nature, is the true life of man. Its right use in the pursuit of knowledge leads to philosophy, which is, as its name signifies, the love of wisdom, and its end is the attainment of virtue. It is because of imperfect knowledge that the love of man is turned to fallacious objects of desire, and his reason is perverted. Knowledge, then, is the prime source of good; ignorance, of evil. Through knowledge to wisdom is the true path of the soul in this life on her return to her Maker, to know whom is her native desire, and her perfect beatitude.

In the exposition of these truths in their various relations a multitude of topics of interest are touched upon, and a multitude of opinions expressed which exhibit the character of Dante's mind and the vast extent of the acquisitions by which his studies had enriched it. The intensity of his moral convictions and the firmness of his moral principles are no less striking in the discourse than the nobility of his genius and the breadth of his intellectual view. Limited and erroneous as are many of his scientific conceptions, there is little trace of superstition or bigotry in his opinions; and though his speculations rest on a false conception of the universe, the revolting dogmas of the common mediæval theology in respect to the human and the Divine nature find no place in them. The mingling of fancy with fact, the unsoundness of the premises from which conclusions are drawn, the errors in belief and in argument, do not affect the main object of his writing, and the ‹Convito› may still be read with sympathy and with profit, as a treatise of moral doctrine by a man the loftiness of whose intelligence rose superior to the hampering limitations of his age.

In its general character and in its biographical revelations the ‹Banquet› forms a connecting link between the ‹New Life› and the ‹Divine Comedy.› It is not possible to frame a complete reconciliation between all the statements of the ‹Banquet› in respect to Dante's experience after the death of Beatrice, and the narrative of them in the ‹New Life›; nor is it necessary, if we allow due place to the poetic and allegoric interpretation of events natural to Dante's genius. In the last part of the ‹New Life› he tells of his infidelity to Beatrice in yielding himself to the attraction of a compassionate lady, in whose sight he found consolation. But the infidelity was of short duration, and, repenting it, he returned with renewed devotion to his only love. In the ‹Convito› he tells us that the compassionate lady was no living person, but was the image of Philosophy, in whose teaching he had found comfort; and the poems which he then wrote and which had the form, and were in the terms of, poems of Love, were properly to be understood as addressed — not to any earthly lady, but — to the lady of the understanding, the most noble and beautiful Philosophy, the daughter of God. And as this image of Philosophy, as the fairest of women, whose eyes and whose smile reveal the joys of Paradise, gradually took clear form, it coalesced with the image of Beatrice herself, she who on earth had been the type to her lover of the beauty of eternal things, and who had revealed to him the Creator in his creature. But now having become one of the blessed in heaven, with a spiritual beauty transcending all earthly charm, she was no longer merely a type of heavenly things, but herself the guide to the knowledge of them, and the divinely commissioned revealer of the wisdom of God. She looking on the face of God reflected its light upon him who loved her. She was one with Divine Philosophy, and as such she appears, in living form, in the ‹Divine Comedy,› and discloses to her lover the truth which is the native desire of the soul, and in the attainment of which is beatitude.

It is this conception which forms the bond of union between the ‹New Life,› the ‹Banquet,› and the ‹Divine Comedy,› and not merely as literary compositions but as autobiographical records. Dante's life and his work are not to be regarded apart; they form a single whole, and they possess a dramatic development of unparalleled consistency and unity. The course of the events of his life shaped itself in accordance with an ideal of the imagination, and to this ideal his works correspond. His first writing, in his poems of love and in the story of the ‹New Life,› forms as it were the first act of a drama which proceeds from act to act in its presentation of his life, with just proportion and due sequence, to its climax and final scene in the last words of the ‹Divine Comedy.› It is as if Fate had foreordained the dramatic unity of his life and work, and impressing her decree upon his imagination, had made him her more or less conscious instrument in its fulfillment.

Had Dante written only his prose treatises and his minor poems, he would still have come down to us as the most commanding literary figure of the Middle Ages, the first modern with a true literary sense, the writer of love verses whose imagination was at once more delicate and more profound than that of any among the long train of his successors, save Shakespeare alone, and more free from sensual stain than that of Shakespeare; the poet of sweetest strain and fullest control of the resources of his art, the scholar of largest acquisition and of completest mastery over his acquisitions, and the moralist with higher ideals of conduct and more enlightened conceptions of duty than any other of the period to which he belonged. All this he would have been, and this would have secured for him a place among the immortals. But all this has but a comparatively small part in raising him to the station which he actually occupies, and in giving to him the influence which he still exerts. It was in the 'Divine Comedy' that his genius found its full expression, and it is to this supreme poem that all his other work serves as substructure.

The general scheme of this poem seems to have been early formed by him; and its actual composition was the main occupation of his years of exile, and must have been its main, one might say its sufficient, consolation. Never was a book of wider scope devised by man; and never was one more elaborate in detail, more varied in substance, or more complete in execution. It is unique in the consistency of its form with its spirit. It possesses such organic unity and proportion as to resemble a work of the creative spirit of Nature herself.

The motive which inspired Dante in the 'Divine Comedy' had its source in his sense of the wretchedness of man in this mortal life, owing to the false direction of his desires, through his ignorance and his misuse of his free will, the chief gift of God to him. The only means of rescue from this wretchedness was the exercise by man of his reason, enlightened by the divine grace, in the guidance of his life. To convince man of this truth, to bring home to him the conviction of the eternal consequences of his conduct in this world, to show him the path of salvation, was Dante's aim. As poet he had received a Divine commission to perform this work. To him the ten talents had been given, and it was for him to put them to the use for which they had been bestowed. It was a consecrated task to which both heaven and earth set their hand, and a loftier task was never undertaken. It was to be accomplished by expounding the design of God in the creation, by setting forth the material and moral order of the universe and the share of man in that order, and his consequent duty and destiny. This was not to be done in the form of abstract propositions addressed to the understanding, but in a poetic narrative which should appeal to the heart and arouse the imagination; a narrative in which human life should be portrayed as an unbroken spiritual existence, prefiguring in its mortal aspects and experience its immortal destiny. The poem was not to be a mere criticism of life, but a solution of its mystery, an explanation of its meaning, and a guide of its course.

To give force and effect to such a design the narrative must be one of personal experience, so conceived as to be a type of the universal experience of man. The poem was to be an allegory, and in making himself its protagonist Dante assumed a double part. He represents both the individual Dante, the actual man, and that man as the symbol of man in general. His description of his journey through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise has a literal veracity; and under the letter is the allegory of the conduct and consequences of all human life. The literal meaning and the allegorical are the web and woof of the fabric, in which the separate incidents are interwoven, with twofold thread, in designs of infinite variety, complexity, and beauty.

In the journey through Hell, Dante represents himself as guided by Virgil, who has been sent to his aid on the perilous way by Beatrice, incited by the Holy Virgin herself, in her infinite compassion for one who has strayed from the true way in the dark forest of the world. Virgil is the type of the right reason, that reason whose guidance, if followed, leads man to the attainment of the moral virtues, by the practice of which sin may be avoided, but which by themselves are not enough for salvation. These were the virtues of the virtuous heathen, unenlightened by divine revelation. Through the world, of whose evil Hell is the type and fulfillment, reason is the sufficient guide and guard along the perilous paths which man must traverse, exposed to the assaults of sin, subject to temptation, and compelled to face the very Devil himself. And when at last, worn and wearied by long-continued effort, and repentant of his frequent errors, he has overcome temptation, and entered on a course of purification through suffering and penitence, whereby he may obtain forgiveness and struggle upward to the height of moral virtue, reason still suffices to lead him on the difficult ascent, until he reaches the security and the joy of having overcome the world. But now reason no longer is sufficient. Another guide is needed to lead the soul through heavenly paths to the attainment of the divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity, by which the soul is made fit for Paradise. And here Beatrice, the type of theology, or knowledge of the things of God, takes the place of Virgil, and conducts the purified and redeemed soul on its return to its divine source, to the consummation of its desires and its bliss in the vision of God himself.

Such is the general scheme of the poem, in which the order of the universe is displayed and the life of man depicted, in scenes of immense dramatic variety and of unsurpassed imaginative reality. It embraces the whole field of human experience. Nature, art, the past, the present, learning, philosophy, all contribute to it. The mastery of the poet over all material which can serve him is complete; the force of his controlling imagination corresponds with the depth and intensity of his moral purpose. And herein lies the exceptional character of the poem, as at once a work of art of supreme beauty and a work of didactic morals of supreme significance. Art indeed cannot, if it would, divorce itself from morals. Into every work of art, whether the artist intend it or not, enters a moral element. But in art, beauty does not submit to be subordinated to any other end, and it is the marvel in Dante that while his main intent is didactic, he attains it by a means of art so perfect that only in a few rare passages does beauty fall a sacrifice to doctrine. The ‹Divine Comedy› is indeed not less incomparable in its beauty than in its vast compass, the variety of its interest, and in the harmony of its form with its spirit. In his lectures ‹On Translating Homer› Mr. Arnold, speaking of the metre of ‹Paradise Lost,› says:—« To this metre, as used in the ‹Paradise Lost,› our country owes the glory of having produced one of the only two poetical works in the grand style which are to be found in the modern languages; the ‹Divine Comedy› of Dante is the other.» But Mr. Arnold does not point out the extraordinary fact, in regard to the style of the ‹Divine Comedy,› that this poem stands at the beginning of modern literature, that there was no previous modern standard of style, that the language was molded and the verse invented by Dante; that he did not borrow his style from the ancients, and that when he says to Virgil, «Thou art he from whom I took the fair style that has done me honor,» he meant only that he had learned from him the principles of noble and adequate poetic expression. The style of the ‹Divine Comedy› is as different from that of the Æneid as it is from that of ‹Paradise Lost.›

There are few other works of man, perhaps there is no other, which afford such evidence as the ‹Divine Comedy› of uninterrupted consistency of purpose, of sustained vigor of imagination, and of steady force of character controlling alike the vagaries of the poetic temperament, the wavering of human purpose, the fluctuation of human powers, and the untowardness of circumstance. From beginning to end of this work of many years there is no flagging of energy, no indication of weakness. The shoulders, burdened by a task almost too great for mortal strength, never tremble under their load.

The contrast between the inner and the outer life of Dante is one of the most impressive pictures of human experience; the pain, the privation, the humiliation of outward circumstance so bitter, so prolonged; the joy, the fullness, the exaltation of inward condition so complete, the achievement so great. Above all other poetry the ‹Divine Comedy› is the expression of high character, and of a manly nature of surpassing breadth and tenderness of sympathy, of intensity of moral earnestness, and elevation of purpose. One closes the narrative of Dante's life and the study of his works with the conviction that he was not only one of the greatest among poets, but a man whose character gives to his poetry its highest and its most enduring interest.

C. E. Norton.

Notes

For the student of Italian, the following books may be recommended as opening the way to the study of Dante's life and works:

1. Tutte le Opere di Dante Alighieri. Nuovamente rivedute nel testo da Dr. E. Moore. Oxford, 1894, 1 vol.; sm. 8vo; pp. x, 490. [The best text of Dante's works, and the only edition of them in one volume. Invaluable to the student.]

2. La Divina Commedia di Dante Alighieri. Riveduta . . . e commentata da G. A. Scartazzini. 2d ediz., Milano, 1896, 1 vol.; sm. 8vo; pp. xx, 1034; col Rimario ed Indice, pp. 122. On the whole the most useful edition for the beginner. The historical and biographical notes and the references to the sources of Dante's allusions are abundant and good; but interpretations of difficult passages or words are not always unquestionable.

Scartazzini's edition of the ‹Divina Commedia› in three volumes, with his volume of ‹Prolegomeni,› may be commended to the more advanced student, who will find it, especially the volume of the ‹Paradise,› a rich storehouse of information.

For the English reader the following books and essays will be useful:—Cary's translation of the ‹Divine Comedy,› in blank verse.

modeled on Milton's verse, and remote from the tone of the original. This is the version of a refined scholar; it has been much admired and is generally quoted in England. It is furnished with good notes.

Longfellow's verse-for-verse unrhymed translation is far the most accurate of the English translations in verse, and is distinguished also for the verbal felicity of its renderings. The comment accompanying it is extensive and of great value, by far the best in English.

Of literal prose translations, there are among others that of the ‹Inferno› by Dr. John Carlyle, which is of very great merit; that of the whole poem, with a comment of interest, by Mr. A. J. Butler; and that also of the whole poem and of the ‹New Life› by C. E. Norton.

The various works on Dante by the Rev. Dr. Edward Moore, of Oxford, are all of the highest worth, and quite indispensable to the thorough student. Their titles are—‹Contributions to the Textual Criticism of the Divina Commedia,› ‹Time References in the Divina Commedia,› ‹Dante and his Early Biographers,› and ‹Studies in Dante.›

Lowell's essay on ‹Dante› (prose works of James Russell Lowell, Riverside edition, Vol. iv.), and ‹Dante,› an essay by the Rev. R. W. Church, late Dean of St. Paul's, should be read by every student. They will open the way to further reading. The ‹Concordance to the Divine Comedy,› by Dr. E. A. Fay, published by Ginn and Company, Boston, for the Dante Society, is a book which the student should have always at hand.

C. E. N.

DANTE'S HOUSE
FLORENCE, ITALY

SELECTIONS FROM THE WORKS OF DANTE

In making the following translations from Dante's chief works, my attempt has been to choose passages which should each have interest in itself, but which, taken together, should have a natural sequence and should illustrate the development of the ruling ideas and controlling sentiment of Dante's life. But they lose much of their power and beauty in being separated from their context, and the reader should bear in mind that such is the closeness of texture of Dante's work, and so complete its unity, that extracts, however numerous and extended, fail to give an adequate impression of its character as a whole. Moreover, no poems suffer greater loss in translation than Dante's, for in no others is there so intimate a relation between the expression and the feeling, between the rhythmical form and the poetic substance. C. E. N.

FROM THE ‹NEW LIFE›

1. The beginning of love.
2. The first salutation of his Lady.
3. The praise of his Lady.
4. Her loveliness.
5. Her death.
6. The anniversary of her death.
7. The hope to speak more worthily of her.

FROM THE ‹BANQUET›

1. The consolation of Philosophy.
2. The desire of the Soul.
3. The noble Soul at the end of Life.

FROM THE ‹DIVINE COMEDY›

1. Hell, Cantos i. and ii. The entrance on the journey through the eternal world.
2. Hell, Canto v. The punishment of carnal sinners.
3. Purgatory, Canto xxvii. The final purgation.
4. Purgatory, Cantos xxx, xxxi. The meeting with his Lady in the Earthly Paradise.
5. Paradise, Canto xxxiii. The final vision.

The selections from the ‹New Life› are from Professor Norton's translation, copyrighted 1867, 1892, 1895, and reprinted by permission of Professor Norton and of Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston, Mass.

THE NEW LIFE

I

The Beginning of Love

Nine times now, since my birth, the heaven of light had turned almost to the same point in its own gyration, when the glorious Lady of my mind, who was called Beatrice by many who knew not why she was so called, first appeared before my eyes. She had already been in this life so long that in its course the starry heaven had moved toward the region of the East one of the twelve parts of a degree; so that at about the beginning of her ninth year she appeared to me, and I near the end of my ninth year saw her. She appeared to me clothed in a most noble color, a modest and becoming crimson, and she was girt and adorned in such wise as befitted her very youthful age. . . .

From that time forward Love lorded it over my soul, which had been so speedily wedded to him: and he began to exercise over me such control and such lordship, through the power which my imagination gave to him, that it behoved me to do completely all his pleasure. He commanded me ofttimes that I should seek to see this youthful angel; so that I in my boyhood often went seeking her, and saw her of such noble and praiseworthy deportment, that truly of her might be said that word of the poet Homer, « She seems not the daughter of mortal man, but of God.» And though her image, which stayed constantly with me, gave assurance to Love to hold lordship over me, yet it was of such noble virtue that it never suffered Love to rule me without the faithful counsel of the reason in those matters in which it was useful to hear such counsel. And since to dwell upon the passions and actions of such early youth seems like telling an idle tale, I will leave them, and, passing over many things which might be drawn from the original where these lie hidden, I will come to those words which are written in my memory under larger paragraphs.

II

The First Salutation of His Lady

When so many days had passed that nine years were exactly complete since the above-described apparition of this most gentle lady, on the last of these days it happened that this admirable lady appeared to me, clothed in purest white, between two gentle ladies, who were of greater age; and, passing along a street, she turned her eyes toward that place where I stood very timidly, and by her ineffable courtesy, which is to-day rewarded in the eternal world, saluted me with such virtue that it seemed to me then that I saw all the bounds of bliss. . . . And since it was the first time that her words came to my ears, I took in such sweetness that, as it were intoxicated, I turned away from the folk, and betaking myself to the solitude of my own chamber, I sat myself down to think of this most courteous lady.

And thinking of her, a sweet slumber overcame me, in which a marvelous vision appeared to me. . . . And [when I awoke] thinking on what had appeared to me, I resolved to make it known to many who were famous poets at that time; and since I had already seen in myself the art of discoursing in rhyme, I resolved to make a sonnet, in which I would salute all the liegemen of Love, and would write to them that which I had seen in my slumber.

III

The Praise of His Lady

Inasmuch as through my looks many persons had learned the secret of my heart, certain ladies who were met together, taking pleasure in one another's company, were well acquainted with my heart, because each of them had witnessed many of my discomfitures. And I, passing near them, as chance led me, was called by one of these gentle ladies; and she who had called me was a lady of very pleasing speech; so that when I drew nigh to them and saw plainly that my most gentle lady was not among them, reassuring myself, I saluted them and asked what might be their pleasure. The ladies were many, and certain of them were laughing together. There were others who were looking at me, awaiting what I might say. There were others who were talking together, one of whom, turning her eyes toward me, and calling me by name, said these words:—"To what end lovest thou this thy lady, since thou canst not sustain her presence? Tell it to us, for surely the end of such a love must be most strange." And when she had said these words to me, not only she, but all the others, began to await with their look my reply. Then I said to them these words:—"My ladies, the end of my love was formerly the salutation of this lady of whom you perchance are thinking, and in that dwelt the beatitude which was the end of all my desires. But since it has pleased her to deny it to me, my lord Love, through his grace, has placed all my beatitude in that which cannot fail me."

Then these ladies began to speak together: and as sometimes we see rain falling mingled with beautiful snow, so it seemed to me I saw their words issue mingled with sighs. And after they had somewhat spoken among themselves, this lady who had first spoken to me said to me yet these words:—"We pray thee that thou tell us wherein consists this beatitude of thine." And I, replying to her, said thus:—"In those words which praise my lady." And she replied:—"If thou hast told us the truth, those words which thou hadst said to her, setting forth thine own condition, must have been composed with other intent."

Then I, thinking on these words, as if ashamed, departed from them, and went saying within myself:—"Since there is such beatitude in those words which praise my lady, why has my speech been of aught else?" And therefore I resolved always henceforth to take for theme of my speech that which should be the praise of this most gentle one. And thinking much on this, I seemed to myself to have undertaken a theme too lofty for me, so that I dared not to begin; and thus I tarried some days with desire to speak, and with fear of beginning.

Then it came to pass that, walking on a road alongside of which was flowing a very clear stream, so great a desire to say somewhat in verse came upon me, that I began to consider the method I should observe; and I thought that to speak of her would not be becoming unless I were to speak to ladies in the second person; and not to every lady, but only to those who are gentle, and are not women merely. Then I say that my tongue spoke as if moved of its own accord, and said, *Ladies that have intelligence of Love*. These words I laid up in my mind with great joy, thinking to take them for my beginning; wherefore then, having returned to the above-mentioned city, after some days of thought, I began a canzone with this beginning.

IV

THE LOVELINESS OF HIS LADY

This most gentle lady, of whom there has been discourse in the preceding words, came into such favor among the people, that when she passed along the way, persons ran to see her; which gave me wonderful joy. And when she was near any one, such modesty came into his heart that he dared not raise his eyes, or return her salutation; and of this many, as having experienced it, could bear witness for me to whoso might not believe it. She, crowned and clothed with humility, took her way, showing no pride in that which she saw and heard. Many said, when she had passed: « This is not a woman; rather she is one of the most beautiful angels of heaven.» And others said: « She is a marvel. Blessed be the Lord who can work thus admirably!» I say that she showed herself so gentle and so full of all pleasantness, that those who looked on her comprehended in themselves a pure and sweet delight, such as they could not after tell in words; nor was there any who might look upon her but that at first he needs must sigh. These and more admirable things proceeded from her admirably and with power. Wherefore I, thinking upon this, desiring to resume the style of her praise, resolved to say words in which I would set forth her admirable and excellent influences, to the end that not only those who might actually behold her, but also others, should know of her whatever words could tell. Then I devised this sonnet: —

So gentle and so gracious doth appear
   My lady when she giveth her salute,
   That every tongue becometh, trembling, mute;
Nor do the eyes to look upon her dare.
Although she hears her praises, she doth go
   Benignly vested with humility;
   And like a thing come down she seems to be
From heaven to earth, a miracle to show.
So pleaseth she whoever cometh nigh,
   She gives the heart a sweetness through the eyes,
   Which none can understand who doth not prove.
And from her countenance there seems to move
   A spirit sweet and in Love's very guise,
   Who to the soul, in going, sayeth: Sigh!

V

The Death of His Lady

After that I began to think one day upon what I had said of my lady, that is, in these two preceding sonnets; and seeing in my thought that I had not spoken of that which at the present time she wrought in me, it seemed to me that I had spoken defectively; and therefore I resolved to say words in which I would tell how I seemed to myself to be disposed to her influence, and how her virtue wrought in me. And not believing that I could relate this in the brevity of a sonnet, I began then a canzone.

Quomodo sedet sola civitas plena populo! facta est quasi vidua domina gentium. [How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of people! How is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations.]

I was yet full of the design of this canzone, and had completed [one] stanza thereof, when the Lord of Justice called this most gentle one to glory, under the banner of that holy Queen Mary, whose name was ever spoken with greatest reverence by this blessed Beatrice.

VI

The Anniversary of the Death of His Lady

On that day on which the year was complete since this lady was made one of the denizens of life eternal, I was seated in a place where, having her in mind, I was drawing an angel upon certain tablets. And while I was drawing it, I turned my eyes and saw at my side men to whom it was meet to do honor. They were looking on what I did, and, as was afterwards told me, they had been there already some time before I became aware of it. When I saw them I rose, and saluting them, said, «Another was just now with me, and on that account I was in thought.» And when they had gone away, I returned to my work, namely, that of drawing figures of angels; and while doing this, a thought came to me of saying words in rhyme, as if for an anniversary poem of her, and of addressing those persons who had come to me.

After this, two gentle ladies sent to ask me to send them some of these rhymed words of mine; wherefore I, thinking on their nobleness, resolved to send to them and to make a new thing which I would send to them with these, in order that I might fulfill their prayers with the more honor. And I devised then a sonnet which relates my condition, and I sent it to them.

Beyond the sphere that widest orbit hath
   Passes the sigh which issues from my heart:
   A new Intelligence doth Love impart
In tears to him, which guides his upward path.
When at the place desired, his course he stays,
   A lady he beholds in honor dight,
   Who so doth shine that through her splendid light,
The pilgrim spirit upon her doth gaze.
He sees her such, that dark his words I find—
   When he reports, his speech so subtle is
   Unto the grieving heart which makes him tell;
But of that gentle one he speaks, I wis,
   Since oft he bringeth Beatrice to mind,
   So that, O ladies dear, I understand him well.

VII

The Hope to Speak More Worthily of His Lady

After this, a wonderful vision appeared to me, in which I saw things which made me resolve to speak no more of the blessed one, until I could more worthily treat of her. And to attain to this, I study to the utmost of my power, as she truly knows. So that, if it shall please Him through whom all things live that my life be prolonged for some years, I hope to say of her what was never said of any woman.

And then may it please him who is the Lord of Grace, that my soul may go to behold the glory of its lady, namely of that blessed Beatrice, who in glory looks upon the face of Him *qui est per omnia sæcula benedictus* [who is blessed forever].

The translations from the ‹Convito› are made for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature› by Professor Norton

THE CONVITO

I

The Consolation of Philosophy

«When the first delight of my soul was lost, of which mention has already been made, I remained pierced with such affliction that no comfort availed me. Nevertheless, after some time, my mind, which was endeavoring to heal itself, undertook, since neither my own nor others' consoling availed, to turn to the mode which other comfortless ones had adopted for their consolation. And I set myself to reading that book of Boëthius, not known to many, in which he, a prisoner and an exile, had consoled himself. And hearing, moreover, that Tully had written a book in which, treating of friendship, he had introduced words of consolation for Lælius, a most excellent man, on the death of Scipio his friend, I set myself to read that. And although it was difficult for me at first to enter into their meaning, I finally entered into it, so far as my knowledge of Latin and a little of my own genius permitted; through which genius I already, as if in a dream, saw many things, as may be seen in the ‹New Life.› And as it sometimes happens that a man goes seeking silver, and beyond his expectation finds gold, which a hidden occasion affords, not perchance without Divine guidance, so I, who was seeking to console myself, found not only relief for my tears, but the substance of authors, and of knowledge, and of books; reflecting upon which, I came to the conclusion that Philosophy, who was the Lady of these authors, this knowledge, and these books, was a supreme thing. And I imagined her as having the features of a gentle lady; and I could not imagine her in any but a compassionate act; wherefore my sense so willingly admired her in truth, that I could hardly turn it from her. And after this imagination I began to go there where she displayed herself truly, that is to say, to the school of the religious, and to the disputations of the philosophers, so that in a short time, perhaps in thirty months, I began to feel so much of her sweetness that the love of her chased away and destroyed every other thought.»

‹The Banquet,› ii. 13.

II

The Desire of the Soul

The supreme desire of everything, and that first given by Nature, is to return to its source; and since God is the source of our souls and Maker of them in his own likeness, as is written, «Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,» to him this soul desires above all to return. And as a pilgrim, who goes along a road on which he never was before, thinks every house he sees afar off to be his inn, and not finding it so, directs his trust to the next, and thus from house to house till he comes to the inn, so our soul at once, on entering the new and untraveled road of this life, turns her eyes to the goal of her supreme good, and therefore whatever thing she sees which seems to have in it some good, she believes to be that. And because her knowledge at first is imperfect, not being experienced or instructed, small goods seem to her great, therefore she begins with desiring them. Wherefore we see children desire exceedingly an apple; and then proceeding further, desire a little bird; and further still a beautiful dress; and then a horse, and then a woman, and then riches not great, and then greater, and then as great as can be. And this happens because in none of these does she find that which she is seeking, and she trusts to find it further on. . . .

Truly this way is lost by error as the roads of earth are; for as from one city to another there is of necessity one best and straightest way, and another that always leads away from it, that is, one which goes in another direction, and many others, some less diverging, and some approaching less near, so in human life are divers roads, of which one is the truest, and another the most deceitful, and certain ones less deceitful, and certain less true. And as we see that that which goes straightest to the city fulfills desire, and gives repose after weariness, and that which goes contrary never fulfills it, and can never give repose, so it falls out in our life: the good traveler arrives at the goal and repose, the mistaken never arrives there, but with much weariness of his mind always looks forward with greedy eyes.

‘The Banquet,’ iv. 12.

III

The Noble Soul at the End of Life

The noble Soul in old age returns to God as to that port whence she set forth on the sea of this life. And as the good mariner, when he approaches port, furls his sails, and with slow course gently enters it, so should we furl the sails of our worldly affairs and turn to God with our whole mind and heart, so that we may arrive at that port with all sweetness and peace. And in regard to this we have from our own nature a great lesson of sweetness, that in such a death as this there is no pain nor any bitterness, but as a ripe fruit is easily and without violence detached from its twig, so our soul without affliction is parted from the body in which it has been. And just as to him who comes from a long journey, before he enters into the gate of his city, the citizens thereof go forth to meet him, so the citizens of the eternal life come to meet the noble Soul; and they do so through her good deeds and contemplations: for having now rendered herself to God, and withdrawn herself from worldly affairs and thoughts, she seems to see those whom she believes to be nigh unto God. Hear what Tully says in the person of the good Cato:—"With ardent zeal I lifted myself up to see your fathers whom I had loved, and not them only, but also those of whom I had heard speak." The noble Soul then at this age renders herself to God and awaits the end of life with great desire; and it seems to her that she is leaving the inn and returning to her own house, it seems to her that she is leaving the road and returning to the city, it seems to her that she is leaving the sea and returning to port. . . . And also the noble Soul at this age blesses the past times; and well may she bless them, because revolving them through her memory she recalls her right deeds, without which she could not arrive with such great riches or so great gain at the port to which she is approaching. And she does like the good merchant, who when he draws near his port, examines his getting, and says: "Had I not passed along such a way, I should not have this treasure, nor have gained that which I may enjoy in my city to which I am drawing near;" and therefore he blesses the way which he has come.

'The Banquet,' iv. 28.

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HELL

CANTO I

THE ENTRANCE ON THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE ETERNAL WORLD

[Dante, astray in a wood, reaches the foot of a hill which he begins to ascend; he is hindered by three beasts; he turns back and is met by Virgil, who proposes to guide him into the eternal world.]

MIDWAY upon the road of our life I found myself within a dark wood, for the right way had been missed. Ah! how hard a thing it is to tell what this wild and rough and dense wood was, which in thought renews the fear! So bitter is it that death is little more. But in order to treat of the good that I found, I will tell of the other things that I saw there. I cannot well recount how I entered it, so full was I of slumber at that point where I abandoned the true way. But after I had arrived at the foot of a hill, where that valley ended which had pierced my heart with fear, I looked on high and saw its shoulders clothed already with the rays of the planet* that leads men aright along every path. Then was the fear a little quieted which in the lake of my heart had lasted through the night that I passed so piteously. And even as one who, with spent breath, issued out of the sea upon the shore, turns to the perilous water and gazes, so did my soul, which still was flying, turn back to look again upon the pass which never had a living person left.

After I had rested a little my weary body, I took my way again along the desert slope, so that the firm foot was always the lower. And lo! almost at the beginning of the steep a she-leopard, light and very nimble, which was covered with a spotted coat. And she did not move from before my face, nay, rather hindered so my road that to return I oftentimes had turned.

The time was at the beginning of the morning, and the Sun was mounting upward with those stars that were with him when Love Divine first set in motion those beautiful things;† so that the hour of the time and the sweet season were occasion of good hope to me concerning that wild beast with the dappled skin. But not so that the sight which appeared to me of a lion did not give me fear. He seemed to be coming against me, with head high and with ravening hunger, so that it seemed that the air was affrighted at him. And a she-wolf, who with all cravings seemed laden in her meagreness, and already had made folk to live forlorn,—she caused me so much heaviness, with the fear that came from sight of her, that I lost hope of the height.* And such as he is who gains willingly, and the time arrives that makes him lose, who in all his thoughts weeps and is sad,—such made me the beast without repose that, coming on against me, little by little was pushing me back thither where the Sun is silent.

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*The sun,—a planet according to the Ptolemaic astronomy.

†It was a common belief that the spring was the season of the creation.

While I was falling back to the low place, before mine eyes appeared one who through long silence seemed faint-voiced. When I saw him in the great desert, «Have pity on me!» I cried to him, «whatso thou art, or shade or real man.» He answered me:—«Not man; man once I was, and my parents were Lombards, and Mantuans by country both. I was born *sub Julio*, though late, and I lived at Rome under the good Augustus, in the time of the false and lying gods. Poet was I, and sang of that just son of Anchises who came from Troy after proud Ilion had been burned. But thou, why returnest thou to so great annoy? Why dost thou not ascend the delectable mountain which is the source and cause of every joy?» «Art thou then that Virgil and that fount which poureth forth so large a stream of speech?» replied I to him with bashful front: «O honor and light of the other poets! may the long study avail me, and the great love, which have made me search thy volume! Thou art my master and my author; thou alone art he from whom I took the fair style that has done me honor. Behold the beast because of which I turned; help me against her, famous sage, for she makes my veins and pulses tremble.» «Thee it behoves to hold another course,» he replied when he saw me weeping, «if thou wishest to escape from this savage place: for this beast, because of which thou criest out, lets not any one pass along her way, but so hinders him that she kills him; and she has a nature so malign and evil that she never sates her greedy will, and after food is hungrier than before. Many are the animals with which she wives, and there shall be more yet, till the hound shall come that will make her die of grief. . . . He shall hunt her through every town till he shall have set her back in hell, there whence envy first sent her forth. Wherefore I think and deem it for thy best that thou follow me, and I will be thy guide and will lead thee hence through the eternal place where thou shalt hear the despairing shrieks, shalt see the ancient spirits woful who each proclaim the second death. And then thou shalt see those who are contented in the fire, because they hope to come, whenever it may be, to the blessed folk; to whom if thou wilt thereafter ascend, there shall be a soul more worthy than I for that. With her I will leave thee at my departure; for that Emperor who reigneth thereabove, because I was rebellious to his law, wills not that into his city any one should come through me. In all parts he governs and there he reigns: there is his city and his lofty seat. O happy he whom thereto he elects!» And I to him:—«Poet, I beseech thee by that God whom thou didst not know, in order that I may escape this ill and worse, that thou lead me thither where thou now hast said, so that I may see the gate of St. Peter, and those whom thou makest so afflicted.»

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* These three beasts typify the division of sins into those of incontinence, of violence, and of fraud.

Then he moved on, and I behind him kept.

CANTO II

THE ENTRANCE ON THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE ETERNAL WORLD, CONTINUED

[Dante, doubtful of his own powers, is discouraged. Virgil cheers him by telling him that he has been sent to his aid by a blessed Spirit from Heaven. Dante casts off fear, and the poets proceed.]

THE day was going, and the dusky air was taking the living things that are on earth from their fatigues, and I alone was preparing to sustain the war alike of the road, and of the woe which the mind that errs not shall retrace. O Muses, O lofty genius, now assist me! O mind that didst inscribe that which I saw, here shall thy nobility appear! I began:—

«Poet, that guidest me, consider my virtue, if it be sufficient, ere to the deep pass thou trustest me. Thou sayest that the parent of Silvius while still corruptible went to the immortal world and was there in the body. Wherefore if the Adversary of every ill was then courteous, thinking on the high effect that should proceed from him, and on the Who and the What,* it seemeth not unmeet to a man of understanding; for in the empyreal heaven he had been chosen for father of revered Rome and of her empire; both which (to say truth indeed) were ordained for the holy place where the successor of the greater Peter has his seat. Through this going, whereof thou givest him vaunt, he learned things which were the cause of his victory and of the papal mantle. Afterward the Chosen Vessel went thither to bring thence comfort to that faith which is the beginning of the way of salvation. But I, why go I thither? or who concedes it? I am not Æneas, I am not Paul; me worthy of this, neither I nor others think; wherefore if I give myself up to go, I fear lest the going may be mad. Thou art wise, thou understandest better than I speak."

And as is he who unwills what he willed, and because of new thoughts changes his design, so that he quite withdraws from beginning, such I became on that dark hillside; wherefore in my thought I abandoned the enterprise which had been so hasty in its beginning.

"If I have rightly understood thy speech," replied that shade of the magnanimous one, "thy soul is hurt by cowardice, which oftentimes encumbers a man so that it turns him back from honorable enterprise, as false seeing doth a beast when it is startled. In order that thou loose thee from this fear I will tell thee wherefore I have come, and what I heard at the first moment that I grieved for thee. I was among those who are suspended,† and a Lady called me, so blessed and beautiful that I besought her to command. Her eyes were more lucent than the star, and she began to speak to me sweet and low, with angelic voice, in her own tongue:—'O courteous Mantuan soul! of whom the fame yet lasts in the world, and shall last so long as the world endures, a friend of mine and not of fortune is upon the desert hillside, so hindered on his road that he has turned for fear; and I am afraid, through that which I have heard of him in heaven, lest he already be so astray that I may have risen late to his succor. Now do thou move, and with thy speech ornate, and with whatever is needful for his deliverance, assist him so that I may be consoled for him. I am Beatrice who make thee go. I come from a place whither I desire to return. Love moved me, and makes me speak. When I shall be before my Lord, I will commend thee often to him.' Then she was silent, and thereon I began:—'O Lady of Virtue, thou alone through whom the human race surpasses all contained within that heaven which has the smallest circles!* so pleasing unto me is thy command that to obey it, were it already done, were slow to me. Thou hast no need further to open unto me thy will; but tell me the cause why thou guardest not thyself from descending down here into this centre, from the ample place whither thou burnest to return.' 'Since thou wishest to know so inwardly, I will tell thee briefly,' she replied to me, 'wherefore I am not afraid to come here within. One ought to be afraid of those things only that have power to do another harm; of other things not, for they are not fearful. I am made by God, thanks be to him, such that your misery touches me not, nor does the flame of this burning assail me. A gentle Lady is in heaven who hath pity for this hindrance whereto I send thee, so that stern judgment there above she breaks. She summoned Lucia in her request, and said, "Thy faithful one now hath need of thee, and unto thee I commend him." Lucia,† the foe of every cruel one, rose and came to the place where I was, seated with the ancient Rachael. She said:—"Beatrice, true praise of God, why dost thou not succor him who so loved thee that for thee he came forth from the vulgar throng? Dost thou not hear the pity of his plaint? Dost thou not see the death that combats him beside the stream whereof the sea hath no vaunt?" In the world never were persons swift to seek their good, and to fly their harm, as I, after these words were uttered, came here below, from my blessed seat, putting my trust in thy upright speech, which honors thee and them who have heard it.' After she had said this to me, weeping she turned her lucent eyes, whereby she made me more speedy in coming. And I came to thee as she willed. Thee have I delivered from that wild beast that took from thee the short ascent of the beautiful mountain. What is it then? Why, why dost thou hold back? why dost thou harbor such cowardice in thy heart? why hast thou not daring and boldness, since three blessed Ladies care for thee in the court of Heaven, and my speech pledges thee such good?"

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* Who he was and What should result.

† In Limbo, neither in hell nor in heaven.

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* The heaven of the Moon, the nearest to Earth of the nine concentric Heavens.

† The type of illuminating grace.

As flowerets, bent and closed by the chill of night, after the sun shines on them straighten themselves all open on their stem, so my weak virtue became, and such good daring hastened to my heart that I began like one enfranchised:—« O compassionate she who succored! and thou courteous who didst speedily obey the true words that she addressed to thee! Thou by thy words hast so disposed my heart with desire of going, that I have returned unto my first intent. Go on now, for one sole will is in us both: thou leader, thou Lord, and thou Master.» Thus I said to him; and when he had moved on, I entered along the deep and savage road.

CANTO V

THE PUNISHMENT OF CARNAL SINNERS

[The Second Circle, that of Carnal Sinners.—Minos.—Shades renowned of old.—Francesca da Rimini.]

THUS I descended from the first circle down into the second, which girdles less space, and so much more woe that it goads to wailing. There abides Minos horribly, and snarls; he examines the sins at the entrance; he judges, and he sends according as he entwines himself. I mean that when the miscreant spirit comes there before him, it confesses itself wholly, and that discerner of sins sees what place of Hell is for it; he girdles himself with his tail so many times as the degrees he wills it should be sent down. Always before him stand many of them. They go, in turn, each to the judgment; they speak, and hear, and then are whirled below.

«O thou that comest to the woful inn,» said Minos to me, when he saw me, leaving the act of so great an office, «beware how thou enterest, and to whom thou intrustest thyself; let not the amplitude of the entrance deceive thee.» And my Leader to him, «Why then dost thou cry out? Hinder not his fated going; thus is it willed there where is power to do that which is willed; and ask thou no more.»

Now the woful notes begin to make themselves heard; now am I come where much lamentation smites me. I had come into a place mute of all light, that bellows as the sea does in a tempest, if it be combated by opposing winds. The infernal hurricane that never rests carries along the spirits with its rapine; whirling and smiting it molests them. When they arrive before its rushing blast, here are shrieks, and bewailing, and lamenting;

here they blaspheme the power Divine. I understood that to such torment are condemned the carnal sinners who subject reason unto lust. And as their wings bear along the starlings in the cold season in a troop large and full, so that blast the evil spirits; hither, thither, down, up, it carries them; no hope ever comforts them, not of repose, but even of less pain.

And as the cranes go singing their lays, making in air a long line of themselves, so saw I come, uttering wails, shades borne along by the aforesaid strife. Wherefore I said, «Master, who are those folk whom the black air so castigates?» «The first of these of whom thou wishest to have knowledge,» said he to me then, «was empress of many tongues. To the vice of luxury was she so abandoned that lust she made licit in her law, to take away the blame she had incurred. She is Semiramis, of whom it is read that she succeeded Ninus and had been his spouse; she held the land which the Soldan rules. The other is she who, for love, slew herself and broke faith to the ashes of Sichæus. Next is Cleopatra, the luxurious. See Helen, for whom so long a time of ill revolved; and see the great Achilles, who at the end fought with love. See Paris, Tristan—» and more than a thousand shades he showed me with his finger, and named them whom love had parted from our life.

After I had heard my Teacher name the dames of eld and the cavaliers, pity overcame me, and I was well-nigh bewildered. I began, «Poet, willingly would I speak with those two that go together, and seem to be so light upon the wind.» And he to me, «Thou shalt see when they shall be nearer to us, and do thou then pray them by that love which leads them, and they will come.» Soon as the wind sways them toward us I lifted my voice: «O weary souls, come speak to us, if One forbid it not.»

As doves, called by desire, with wings open and steady, fly through the air to their sweet nest, borne by their will, these issued from the troop where Dido is, coming to us through the malign air, so strong was the compassionate cry:—

«O living creature, gracious and benign, that goest through the lurid air visiting us who stained the world blood-red,—if the King of the universe were a friend we would pray him for thy peace, since thou hast pity on our perverse ill. Of what it pleases thee to hear, and what to speak, we will hear and we will speak to you, while the wind, as now, is hushed for us. The city where I was born sits upon the sea-shore, where the

Po, with his followers, descends to have peace. Love, that on gentle heart quickly lays hold, seized him for the fair person that was taken from me, and the mode still hurts me. Love, which absolves no loved one from loving, seized me for the pleasing of him so strongly that, as thou seest, it does not even now abandon me. Love brought us to one death. Caina waits him who quenched our life.» These words were borne to us from them.

Soon as I had heard those injured souls I bowed my face, and held it down, until the Poet said to me, «What art thou thinking?» When I replied, I began:—«Alas! how many sweet thoughts, how great desire, led these unto the woful pass.» Then I turned me again to them, and I spoke, and began, «Francesca, thy torments make me sad and piteous to weeping. But tell me, at the time of the sweet sighs by what and how did love concede to you to know the dubious desires?» And she to me, «There is no greater woe than in misery to remember the happy time, and that thy Teacher knows. But if to know the first root of our love thou hast so great a longing, I will do like one who weeps and tells.

«We were reading one day, for delight, of Lancelot, how love constrained him. We were alone and without any suspicion. Many times that reading made us lift our eyes, and took the color from our faces, but only one point was that which overcame us. When we read of the longed-for smile being kissed by such a lover, this one, who never from me shall be divided, kissed my mouth all trembling. Galahaut* was the book, and he who wrote it. That day we read in it no farther.»

While one spirit said this, the other was weeping so that through pity I swooned as if I had been dying, and fell as a dead body falls.

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* It was Galahaut who, in the Romance, prevailed on Guinevere to give a kiss to Lancelot.

PURGATORY

CANTO XXVII

The Final Purgation

[Seventh Ledge: the Lustful.— Passage through the flames.— Stairway in the rock.— Night upon the stairs.— Dream of Dante.— Morning.— Ascent to the Earthly Paradise.— Last words of Virgil.]

As when he darts forth his first rays there where his Maker shed his blood (Ebro falling under the lofty Scales, and the waves in the Ganges scorched by noon), so the sun was now standing; so that the day was departing, when the glad Angel of God appeared to us.* Outside the flame he was standing on the bank, and was singing «Beati mundo corde» [Blessed are the pure in heart], in a voice far more living than ours: then, «No one goes further, ye holy souls, if first the fire sting not; enter into it, and to the song beyond be ye not deaf,» he said to us, when we were near him. Whereat I became such, when I heard him, as is he who in the pit is put.† With hands clasped upwards, I stretched forward, looking at the fire, and imagining vividly human bodies I had once seen burnt. The good Escorts turned toward me, and Virgil said to me, «My son, here may be torment, but not death. Bethink thee! bethink thee! and if I even upon Geryon guided thee safe, what shall I do now that I am nearer God? Believe for certain that if within the belly of this flame thou shouldst stand full a thousand years, it could not make thee bald of one hair. And if thou perchance believest that I deceive thee, draw near to it, and make trial for thyself with thine own hands on the hem of thy garments. Put aside now, put aside every fear; turn hitherward, and come on secure.»

And I still motionless and against conscience!

When he saw me still stand motionless and obdurate, he said, disturbed a little, «Now see, son, between Beatrice and thee is this wall.»

As at the name of Thisbe, Pyramus, at point of death, opened his eyelids and looked at her, what time the mulberry became vermilion, so, my obduracy becoming softened, I turned me to the wise Leader, hearing the name that in my memory is ever welling up. Whereat he nodded his head, and said, « How! do we want to stay on this side? » Then he smiled as one doth at a child who is conquered by an apple.

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*When it is sunrise at Jerusalem it is midnight in Spain, midday at the Ganges, and sunset in Purgatory.

†To be buried alive.

Then within the fire he set himself before me, praying Statius that he would come behind, who previously, on the long road, had divided us. When I was in, into boiling glass I would have thrown myself to cool me, so without measure was the burning there. My sweet Father, to encourage me, went talking ever of Beatrice, saying, « I seem already to see her eyes. »

A voice was guiding us, which was singing on the other side, and we, ever attentive to it, came forth there where was the ascent. « Venite, benedicti Patris mei » [Come, ye blessed of my Father], sounded within a light that was there such that it overcame me, and I could not look on it. « The sun departs, » it added, « and the evening comes; tarry not, but hasten your steps so long as the west grows not dark. »

The way mounted straight, through the rock, in such direction that I cut off in front of me the rays of the sun which was already low. And of few stairs had we made essay ere, by the vanishing of the shadow, both I and my Sages perceived behind us the setting of the sun. And before the horizon in all its immense regions had become of one aspect, and night had all her dispensations, each of us made of a stair his bed; for the nature of the mountain took from us the power more than the delight of ascending.

As goats, who have been swift and wayward on the peaks ere they are fed, become tranquil as they ruminate, silent in the shade while the sun is hot, watched by the herdsman, who on his staff is leaning and leaning guards them; and as the shepherd, who lodges out of doors, passes the night beside his quiet flock, watching that the wild beast may not scatter it: such were we all three then, I like a goat, and they like shepherds, hemmed in on this side and on that by the high rock. Little of the outside could there appear, but through that little I saw the stars both brighter and larger than their wont. Thus ruminating, and thus gazing upon them, sleep overcame me, sleep which oft before a deed be done knows news thereof.

At the hour, I think, when from the east on the mountain first beamed Cytherea, who with fire of love seems always burning, I seemed in dream to see a lady, young and beautiful, going through a meadow gathering flowers, and singing; she was saying, «Let him know, whoso asks my name, that I am Leah, and I go moving my fair hands around to make myself a garland. To please me at the glass here I adorn me, but my sister Rachel never withdraws from her mirror, and sits all day. She is as fain to look with her fair eyes as I to adorn me with my hands. Her seeing, and me doing, satisfies.»*

And now before the splendors which precede the dawn, and rise the more grateful unto pilgrims as in returning they lodge less remote,† the shadows fled away on every side, and my sleep with them; whereupon I rose, seeing my great Masters already risen. «That pleasant apple which through so many branches the care of mortals goes seeking, to-day shall put in peace thy hungerings.» Virgil used words such as these toward me, and never were there gifts which could be equal in pleasure to these. Such wish upon wish came to me to be above, that at every step thereafter I felt the feathers growing for my flight.

When beneath us all the stairway had been run, and we were on the topmost step, Virgil fixed his eyes on me, and said, «The temporal fire and the eternal thou hast seen, son, and art come to a place where of myself no further onward I discern. I have brought thee here with understanding and with art: thine own pleasure now take thou for guide; forth art thou from the steep ways, forth art thou from the narrow. See there the sun, which on thy front doth shine; see the young grass, the flowers, the shrubs, which here the earth of itself alone produces. Until rejoicing come the beautiful eyes which weeping made me come to thee, thou canst sit down and thou canst go among them. Expect no more or word or sign from me. Free, upright, and sane is thine own free will, and it would be wrong not to act according to its pleasure; wherefore thee over thyself I crown and mitre.»

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*Leah and Rachel are respectively the types of the virtuous active and contemplative life.

†As they come nearer home.

CANTOS XXX AND XXXI

The Meeting with His Lady in the Earthly Paradise

[Beatrice appears.— Departure of Virgil.— Reproof of Dante by Beatrice.— Confession of Dante.— Passage of Lethe.— Unveiling of Beatrice.]

When the septentrion of the first heaven,* which never setting knew, nor rising, nor veil of other cloud than sin,—and which was making every one there acquainted with his duty, as the lower† makes whoever turns the helm to come to port,—stopped still, the truthful people who had come first between the griffon and it, turned to the chariot as to their peace, and one of them, as if sent from heaven, singing, cried thrice, « Veni, sponsa, de Libano » [Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse], and all the others after.

As the blessed at the last trump will arise swiftly, each from his tomb, singing Hallelujah with recovered voice, so upon the divine chariot, *ad vocem tanti senis* [at the voice of so great an elder], rose up a hundred ministers and messengers of life eternal. All were saying, « Benedictus, qui venis » [Blessed thou that comest], and, scattering flowers above and around, « Manibus o date lilia plenis » [Oh, give lilies with full hands].‡

I have seen ere now at the beginning of the day the eastern region all rosy, while the rest of the heaven was beautiful with fair clear sky; and the face of the sun rise shaded, so that through the tempering of vapors the eye sustained it a long while. Thus within a cloud of flowers, which from the angelic hands was ascending, and falling down again within and without, a lady, with olive wreath above a white veil, appeared to me, robed with the color of living flame beneath a green mantle.§ And my spirit that now for so long a time had not been broken down, trembling with amazement at her presence, without having more knowledge by the eyes, through occult virtue that proceeded from her, felt the great potency of ancient love.

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* In the preceding canto a mystic procession, symbolizing the Old and New Dispensation, has appeared in the Earthly Paradise. At its head were seven candlesticks, symbols of the sevenfold spirit of the Lord; it was followed by personages representing the truthful books of the Old Testament, and these by the chariot of the Church drawn by a griffon, who in his double form, half eagle and half lion, represented Christ in his double nature, human and divine.

† The lower septentrion, the seven stars of the Great Bear.

‡ Words from the Æneid (vi. 884), sung by the angels.

§ The olive is the symbol of wisdom and of peace; the three colors are those of Faith, Charity and Hope.

Soon as upon my sight the lofty virtue smote, which already had transfixed me ere I was out of boyhood, I turned me to the left with the confidence with which the little child runs to his mother when he is frightened, or when he is troubled, to say to Virgil, «Less than a drachm of blood remains in me that doth not tremble; I recognize the signals of the ancient flame,»*— but Virgil had left us deprived of himself; Virgil, sweetest Father, Virgil, to whom I for my salvation gave me. Nor did all which the ancient mother lost† avail unto my cheeks, cleansed with dew,‡ that they should not turn dark again with tears.

«Dante, though Virgil be gone away, weep not yet, for it behoves thee to weep by another sword.»

Like an admiral who, on poop or on prow, comes to see the people that are serving on the other ships, and encourages them to do well, upon the left border of the chariot—when I turned me at the sound of my own name, which of necessity is registered here—I saw the Lady, who had first appeared to me veiled beneath the angelic festival, directing her eyes toward me across the stream; although the veil which descended from her head, circled by the leaf of Minerva, did not allow her to appear distinctly. Royally, still haughty in her mien, she went on, as one who speaks and keeps back his warmest speech: «Look at me well: I am indeed, I am indeed Beatrice. How hast thou deigned to approach the mountain? Didst thou know that man is happy here?» My eyes fell down into the clear fount; but seeing myself in it I drew them to the grass, such great shame burdened my brow. As to the son the mother seems proud, so she seemed to me; for somewhat bitter tasteth the savor of stern pity.

She was silent, and the angels sang of a sudden, «In te, Domine, speravi» [In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust];§ but beyond «pedes meos» [my feet] they did not pass. Even as the snow, among the living rafters upon the back of Italy, is congealed, blown, and packed by Slavonian winds, then melting trickles through itself, if only the land that loses shadow* breathe so that it seems a fire that melts the candle: so was I without tears and sighs before the song of those who time their notes after the notes of the eternal circles. But when I heard in their sweet accords their compassion for me, more than if they had said, «Lady, why dost thou so confound him?» the ice that was bound tight around my heart became breath and water, and with anguish poured from my breast through my mouth and eyes.

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*Words from the Æneid, iv. 23.

†All the joy and beauty of Paradise which Eve lost, and which were now surrounding Dante.

‡When he had entered Purgatory.

§The words are from Psalm xxxi., verses 1 to 8.

She, still standing motionless on the aforesaid side of the chariot, then turned her words to those pious† beings thus:—«Ye watch in the eternal day, so that nor night nor slumber robs from you one step the world may make along its ways; wherefore my reply is with greater care, that he who is weeping yonder may understand me, so that fault and grief may be of one measure. Not only through the working of the great wheels,‡ which direct every seed to some end according as the stars are its companions, but through largess of divine graces, which have for their rain vapors so lofty that our sight goes not near thereto,—this man was such in his new life, virtually, that every right habit would have made admirable proof in him. But so much the more malign and more savage becomes the land ill-sown and untilled, as it has more of good terrestrial vigor. Some time did I sustain him with my face; showing my youthful eyes to him, I led him with me turned in right direction. So soon as I was upon the threshold of my second age, and had changed life, this one took himself from me, and gave himself to others. When from flesh to spirit I had ascended, and beauty and virtue were increased in me, I was less dear and less pleasing to him; and he turned his steps along a way not true, following false images of good, which pay no promise in full. Nor did it avail me to win by entreaty§ inspirations with which, both in dream and otherwise, I called him back; so little did he heed them. So low he fell that all means for his salvation were already short, save showing him the lost people.‖ For this I visited the gate of the dead, and to him, who has conducted him up hither, my prayers were borne with weeping. The high decree of God would be broken, if Lethe should be passed, and such viands should be tasted without any scot of repentance which may pour forth tears.

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* If the wind blow from Africa.

† Both devout and piteous.

‡ Through the influences of the circling heavens.

§ From divine grace.

‖ In Hell.

« O thou who art on the further side of the sacred river,» turning her speech with the point to me, which only by the edge had seemed to me keen, she began anew, going on without delay, « say, say if this be true: to so great an accusation it behoves that thine own confession be conjoined.» My power was so confused that my voice moved, and became extinct before it could be released by its organs. A little she bore it; then she said, « What thinkest thou? Reply to me; for the sad memories in thee are not yet injured by the water.» * Confusion and fear together mingled forced such a « Yes » from my mouth that the eyes were needed for the understanding of it.

As a crossbow breaks its cord and its bow when it shoots with too great tension, and with less force the shaft hits the mark, so did I burst under that heavy load, pouring forth tears and sighs, and the voice slackened along its passage. Whereupon she to me:—« Within those desires of mine † that were leading thee to love the Good beyond which there is nothing whereto man may aspire, what trenches running traverse, or what chains didst thou find, for which thou wert obliged thus to abandon the hope of passing onward? And what enticements, or what advantages on the brow of the others ‡ were displayed, for which thou wert obliged to court them?» After the drawing of a bitter sigh, hardly had I the voice that answered, and the lips with difficulty gave it form. Weeping, I said, « The present things with their false pleasure turned my steps soon as your face was hidden.» And she:—« Hadst thou been silent, or hadst thou denied that which thou dost confess, thy fault would be not less noted, by such a Judge is it known. But when the accusation of the sin bursts from one's own cheek, in our court the wheel turns itself back against the edge. But yet, that thou mayst now bear shame for thy error, and that another time, hearing the Sirens, thou mayst be stronger, lay aside the seed of weeping and listen; so shalt thou hear how in opposite direction my buried flesh ought to have moved thee. Never did nature or art present to thee pleasure such as the fair limbs

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* Not yet obliterated by the waters of Lethe.

† Inspired by me.

‡ Other objects of desire.

wherein I was inclosed; and they are scattered in earth. And if the supreme pleasure thus failed thee through my death, what mortal things ought then to have drawn thee into its desire? Forsooth thou oughtest, at the first arrow of things deceitful, to have risen up, following me who was no longer such. Nor should thy wings have weighed thee downward to await more blows, either girl or other vanity of so brief a use. The young little bird awaits two or three; but before the eyes of the full-fledged the net is spread in vain, the arrow shot."

As children, ashamed, dumb, with eyes upon the ground, stand listening and conscience-stricken and repentant, so was I standing. And she said, "Since through hearing thou art grieved, lift up thy beard and thou shalt receive more grief in seeing." With less resistance is a sturdy oak uprooted by a native wind, or by one from the land of Iarbas,* than I raised up my chin at her command; and when by the beard she asked for my eyes, truly I recognized the venom of the argument.† And as my face stretched upward, my sight perceived that those primal creatures were resting from their strewing, and my eyes, still little assured, saw Beatrice turned toward the animal that is only one person in two natures. Beneath her veil and beyond the stream she seemed to me more to surpass her ancient self, than she surpassed the others here when she was here. So pricked me there the nettle of repentance, that of all other things the one which most turned me aside unto its love became most hostile to me.‡

Such contrition stung my heart that I fell overcome; and what I then became she knows who afforded me the cause.

Then, when my heart restored my outward faculties, I saw above me the lady whom I had found alone,§ and she was saying, "Hold me, hold me." She had drawn me into the stream up to the throat, and dragging me behind was moving upon the water light as a shuttle. When I was near the blessed shore, "Asperges me"‖ I heard so sweetly that I cannot remember it, far less can write it. The beautiful lady opened her arms, clasped my head, and plunged me in where it behoved that I should swallow the water. Then she took me, and, thus bathed, brought me within the dance of the four beautiful ones,* and each of them covered me with her arm. "Here we are nymphs, and in heaven we are stars; ere Beatrice had descended to the world we were ordained unto her for her handmaids. We will lead thee to her eyes; but in the joyous light which is within them, the three yonder † who deeper gaze shall make keen thine own." Thus singing they began; and then to the breast of the griffon they led me with them, where Beatrice was standing turned toward us. They said, "See that thou sparest not thy sight: we have placed thee before the emeralds whence Love of old drew his arrows upon thee." A thousand desires hotter than flame bound my eyes to the relucent eyes which only upon the griffon were standing fixed. As the sun in a mirror, not otherwise, the twofold animal was gleaming therewithin, now with one, now with another mode.‡ Think, Reader, if I marveled when I saw the thing stand quiet in itself, while in its image it was transmuting itself.

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* Numidia, of which Iarbas was king.

† The beard being the sign of manhood, which should be accompanied by wisdom.

‡ The one which by its attractions most diverted me from Beatrice.

§ A solitary lady whom he had met on first entering the Earthly Paradise, and who had accompanied him thus far.

‖ The first words of the 7th verse of the 51st Psalm: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."

While, full of amazement and glad, my soul was tasting that food which, sating of itself, causes hunger for itself, the other three, showing themselves in their bearing of loftier order, came forward dancing to their angelic melody. "Turn, Beatrice, turn thy holy eyes," was their song, "upon thy faithful one, who to see thee has taken so many steps. For grace do us the grace that thou unveil to him thy mouth, so that he may discern the second beauty which thou concealest."

O splendor of living light eternal! Who hath become so pallid under the shadow of Parnassus, or hath so drunk at its cistern, that he would not seem to have his mind incumbered, trying to represent thee as thou didst appear there where in harmony the heaven overshadows thee, when in the open air thou didst thyself disclose?

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* The four cardinal virtues.

† The three evangelic virtues.

‡ Now with the divine, now with the human.

PARADISE

CANTO XXXIII

The Beatific Vision

[Dante, having been brought by Beatrice to Paradise in the Empyrean, is left by her in charge of St. Bernard, while she takes her place among the blessed.— Prayer of St. Bernard to the Virgin.— Her intercession.—The vision of God.—The end of desire.]

« Virgin Mother, daughter of thine own Son, humble and exalted more than any creature, fixed term of the eternal counsel, thou art she who didst so ennoble human nature that its own Maker disdained not to become His own making. Within thy womb was rekindled the love through whose warmth this flower has thus blossomed in the eternal peace. Here thou art to us the noonday torch of charity, and below, among mortals, thou art the living fount of hope. Lady, thou art so great, and so availest, that whoso wishes grace, and has not recourse to thee, wishes his desire to fly without wings. Thy benignity not only succors him who asks, but oftentimes freely foreruns the asking. In thee mercy, in thee pity, in thee magnificence, in thee whatever of goodness is in any creature, are united. Now doth this man, who, from the lowest abyss of the universe, far even as here, has seen one by one the lives of spirits, supplicate thee, through grace, for virtue such that he may be able with his eyes to uplift himself higher toward the Ultimate Salvation. And I, who never for my own vision burned more than I do for his, proffer to thee all my prayers, and pray that they be not scant, that with thy prayers thou wouldst dissipate for him every cloud of his mortality, so that the Supreme Pleasure may be displayed to him. Further I pray thee, Queen, who canst what so thou wilt, that, after so great a vision, thou wouldst preserve his affections sound. May thy guardianship vanquish human impulses. Behold Beatrice with all the blessed for my prayers clasp their hands to thee.»

The eyes beloved and revered by God, fixed on the speaker, showed to us how pleasing unto her are devout prayers. Then to the Eternal Light were they directed, on which it is not to be believed that eye so clear is turned by any creature.

And I, who to the end of all desires was approaching, even as I ought, ended within myself the ardor of my longings.

Bernard was beckoning to me, and was smiling, that I should look upward; but I was already, of my own accord, such as he wished; for my sight, becoming pure, was entering more and more through the radiance of the lofty Light which of itself is true.*

Thenceforward my vision was greater than our speech, which yields to such a sight, and the memory yields to such excess.

As is he who dreaming sees, and after the dream the passion remains imprinted, and the rest returns not to the mind, such am I; for my vision almost wholly fails, while the sweetness that was born of it yet distills within my heart. Thus the snow is by the sun unsealed; thus on the wind, in the light leaves, was lost the saying of the Sibyl.

O Supreme Light, that so high upliftest Thyself from mortal conceptions, re-lend a little to my mind of what Thou didst appear, and make my tongue so powerful that it may be able to leave one single spark of Thy glory for the future people; for by returning somewhat to my memory and by sounding a little in these verses, more of Thy victory shall be conceived.

I think that by the keenness of the living ray which I endured, I should have been dazzled if my eyes had been averted from it. And it comes to my mind that for this reason I was the more hardy to sustain so much, that I joined my look unto the Infinite Goodness.

O abundant Grace, whereby I presumed to fix my eyes through the Eternal Light so far that there I consummated my vision!

In its depth I saw that whatsoever is dispersed through the universe is there included, bound with love in one volume; substance and accidents and their modes, fused together, as it were, in such wise, that that of which I speak is one simple Light. The universal form of this knot† I believe that I saw, because in saying this I feel that I more abundantly rejoice. One instant only is greater oblivion for me than five-and-twenty centuries to the emprise which made Neptune wonder at the shadow of Argo.‡

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* Light in its essence; all other light is derived from it.

† This union of substance and accident.

‡ So overwhelming was the vision that the memory could not retain it completely even for an instant.

Thus my mind, wholly rapt, was gazing fixed, motionless, and intent, and ever with gazing grew enkindled. In that Light one becomes such that it is impossible he should ever consent to turn himself from it for other sight; because the Good which is the object of the will is all collected in it, and outside of it that is defective which is perfect there.

Now will my speech be shorter even in respect to that which I remember, than an infant's who still bathes his tongue at the breast. Not because more than one simple semblance was in the Living Light wherein I was gazing, which is always such as it was before; but through my sight, which was growing strong in me as I looked, one sole appearance, as I myself changed, was altering itself to me.

Within the profound and clear subsistence of the lofty Light appeared to me three circles of three colors and of one dimension; and one appeared reflected by the other, as Iris by Iris, and the third appeared fire which from the one and from the other is equally breathed forth.

O how short is the telling, and how feeble toward my conception! and this toward what I saw is such that it suffices not to call it little.

O Light Eternal, that sole dwellest in Thyself, sole understandest Thyself, and, by Thyself understood and understanding, lovest and smilest on Thyself! That circle, which, thus conceived, appeared in Thee as a reflected light, being somewhile regarded by my eyes, seemed to me depicted within itself, of its own very color, by our effigy, wherefore my sight was wholly set upon it. As is the geometer who wholly applies himself to measure the circle, and finds not by thinking that principle of which he is in need, such was I at that new sight. I wished to see how the image accorded with the circle, and how it has its place therein; but my own wings were not for this, had it not been that my mind was smitten by a flash in which its wish came.*

To my high fantasy here power failed; but now my desire and my will, like a wheel which evenly is moved, the Love was turning which moves the Sun and the other stars.†

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*The wish to see the mystery of the union of the two natures, the divine and human in Christ.

†That Love which makes sun and stars revolve was giving a concordant revolution to my desire and my will.

JAMES DARMESTETER

(1849–1894)

A GOOD example of the latter-day enlightened savant is the French Jew, James Darmesteter, whose premature death robbed the modern world of scholarship of one of its most distinguished figures. Scholars who do noble service in adding to the sum total of human knowledge often are specialists, the nature of whose work excludes them from general interest and appreciation. It was not so with this man,— not alone an Oriental philologist of more than national repute, but a broadly cultured, original mind, an enlightened spirit, and a master of literary expression. Darmesteter calls for recognition as a maker of literature as well as a scientist.

The son of a humble Jewish bookbinder, subjected to the disadvantages and hardships of poverty, James Darmesteter was born at Chateau-Salins in Lorraine in 1849, but got his education in Paris, early imbibing the Jewish traditions, familiar from youth with the Bible and the Talmud. At the public school, whence he was graduated at eighteen, he showed his remarkable intellectual powers and attracted the attention of scholars like Bréal and Burnouf, who, noting his aptitude for languages, advised devotion to Oriental linguistics. After several years of uncertainty, years spent with books and in travel, and in the desultory production of poetry and fiction, philological study was undertaken as his life work, with remarkable results. For twenty years he labored in this field, and his appointment in 1882 to succeed Renan as Secretary of the Asiatic Society of France speaks volumes for the position he won. In 1885 he became professor of Iranian languages and literature in the College of France. Other scholastic honors fell to him in due course and good measure.

As a scholar Darmesteter's most important labors were the exposition of Zoroastrianism, the national faith of ancient Persia, which he made a specialty; and his French translation of and commentary on the Avesta, the Bible of that religion. As an interpreter of Zoroaster he sought to unite synthetically two opposing modern schools: that which relied solely upon native traditions, and that which, regarding these as untrustworthy, drew its conclusions from an examination of the text, supplemented by the aid of Sanskrit on the side of language and of the Vedas on the side of religion. Darmesteter's work was thus boldly comprehensive. He found in the Avesta the influence of such discordant elements as the Bible, Buddha, and

Greek philosophy, and believed that in its present form it was composed at a later time than has been supposed. These technical questions are still mooted points with the critics. The translation of the Avesta will perhaps stand as his greatest achievement. A herculean labor of four years, it was rewarded by the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles-Lettres with the 20,000-franc prize given but once in a decade for the work which, in the Academy's opinion, had best served or brought most honor to the country.

But the technical accomplishments of learning represent but a fragment of Darmesteter's amazing mental activity. He wrote a striking book on the Mahdi, the tenacious belief in the Mohammedan Messiah taking hold on his imagination. He was versed in English literature, edited Shakespeare, and introduced his countrymen to Browning. While in Afghanistan on a philological mission he gathered, merely as a side pursuit, a unique collection of Afghan folk-songs, and the result was a fascinating and valuable paper in a new field. He helped to found a leading French review. Articles of travel, critiques on subjects political, religious, literary, and social, fell fast from his pen. In his general essays on these broader, more vital aspects of thought and life, he is an artist in literary expression, a writer with a distinct and great gift for form. Here his vigorous mind, ample training, his humanistic tastes and humanitarian aspirations, are all finely in evidence.

The English reader who seeks an introduction to Darmesteter is directed to his ‹Selected Essays,› translated by Helen B. Jastrow, edited with a memoir by Professor Morris Jastrow, Jr. (Houghton, Mifflin and Company, Boston). There is a translation by Ada S. Ballin of his ‹The Mahdi› (Harper and Brothers, New York); and in the Contemporary Review for January, 1895, is a noble appreciation of Darmesteter by his friend Gaston Paris. In the ‹Sacred Books of the East› will be found an English rendering of the Avesta by Darmesteter and Mills.

As a thinker in the philosophical sense Darmesteter was remarkable. Early breaking away from orthodox Judaism, his philological and historical researches led him to accept the conclusions of destructive criticism with regard to the Bible; and a disciple of Renan, he became enrolled among those scholars who see in science the one explanation of the universe. But possessing, along with his keen analytic powers, a nature dominantly ethical, he made humanity his idol. His patriotism for France was intense; and, a Jew always sympathetic to the wonderful history of his people,—in his later years by a brilliant, poetical, almost audacious interpretation of the Old Testament,—he found a solution of the riddle of life in the Hebrew prophets. What he deemed their essential faith—Judaism stripped of ritual and legend—he declared to be in harmony with the scientific creed of the present: belief in the unity of moral law,—the Old Testament Jehovah; and belief in the eventual triumph of justice upon this earth,—the modern substitute for the New Testament heaven. This doctrine, which in most hands would be cold and comfortless enough, he makes vital, engaging, through the passionate presentation of an eloquent lover of his fellow-man. In a word, Darmesteter was a Positivist, dowered, like that other noble Positivist George Eliot, with a nature sensitive to spiritual issues.

An idyllic passage in Darmesteter's toilful scholar life was his tender friendship with the gifted English woman, A. Mary F. Robinson. Attracted by her lovely verse, the intellectual companionship ripened into love, and for his half-dozen final years he enjoyed her wifely aid and sympathy in what seems to have been an ideal union. The end, when it came, was quick and painless. Always of a frail constitution, stunted in body from childhood, he died in harness, October 19th, 1894, his head falling forward on his desk as he wrote. The tributes that followed make plain the enthusiastic admiration James Darmesteter awakened in those who knew him best. The leading Orientalist of his generation, he added to the permanent acquisitions of scholarship, and made his impress as one of the remarkable personalities of France in the late nineteenth century. In the language of a friend, «a Jew by race, a Greek by culture, a Frenchman in heart,» he furnishes another illustration of that strain of genius which seems like a compensatory gift to the Jewish folk for its manifold buffetings at the hand of Fate.

ERNEST RENAN

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The mistaken judgments passed upon M. Renan are due to the fact that in his work he did not place the emphasis upon the Good, but upon the True. Men concluded that for him, therefore, science was the whole of life. The environment in which he was formed was forgotten,—an environment in which the moral sense was exquisite and perfect, while the scientific sense was *nil*. He did not need to discover the moral sense,—it was the very atmosphere in which he lived. When the scientific sense awoke in him, and he beheld the world and history transfigured by it, he was dazzled, and the influence lasted throughout his life. He dreamed of making France understand this new revelation; he was the apostle of this gospel of truth and science, but in heart and mind he never attacked what is permanent and divine in the other gospel. Thus he was a complete man, and deserved the disdain of dilettantes morally dead, and of mystics scientifically atonic.

What heritage has M. Renan left to posterity? As a scholar he created religious criticism in France, and prepared for universal science that incomparable instrument, the Corpus. As an author he bequeathed to universal art, pages which will endure, and to him may be applied what he said of George Sand:—« He had the divine faculty of giving wings to his subject, of producing under the form of fine art the idea which in other hands remained crude and formless.» As a philosopher he left behind a mass of ideas which he did not care to collect in doctrinal shape, but which nevertheless constitute a coherent whole. One thing only in this world is certain,—duty. One truth is plain in the course of the world as science reveals it: the world is advancing to a higher, more perfect form of being. The supreme happiness of man is to draw nearer to this God to come, contemplating him in science, and preparing, by action, the advent of a humanity nobler, better endowed, and more akin to the ideal Being.

JUDAISM

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JUDAISM has not made the miraculous the basis of its dogma, nor installed the supernatural as a permanent factor in the progress of events. Its miracles, from the time of the Middle Ages, are but a poetic detail, a legendary recital, a picturesque decoration; and its cosmogony, borrowed in haste from Babylon by the last compiler of the Bible, with the stories of the apple and the serpent, over which so many Christian generations have labored, never greatly disturbed the imagination of the rabbis, nor weighed very heavily upon the thought of the Jewish philosophers. Its rites were never «an instrument of faith,» an expedient to «lull» rebellious thought into faith; they are merely cherished customs, a symbol of the family, of transitory value, and destined to disappear when there shall be but *one* family in a world converted to the *one* truth. Set aside all these miracles, all these rites, and behind them will be found the two great dogmas which, ever since the prophets, constitute the whole of Judaism — the Divine unity and Messianism; unity of law throughout the world, and the terrestrial triumph of justice in humanity. These are the two dogmas which at the present time illuminate humanity in its progress, both in the scientific and social order of things, and which are termed in modern parlance *unity of forces* and *belief in progress.*

For this reason, Judaism is the only religion that has never entered into conflict, and never can, with either science or social progress, and that has witnessed, and still witnesses, all their conquests without a sense of fear. These are not hostile forces that it accepts or submits to merely from a spirit of toleration or policy, in order to save the remains of its power by a compromise. They are old friendly voices, which it recognizes and salutes with joy; for it has heard them resound for centuries already, in the axioms of free thought and in the cry of the suffering heart. For this reason the Jews, in all the countries which have entered upon the new path, have begun to take a share in all the great works of civilization, in the triple field of science, of art, and of action; and that share, far from being an insignificant one, is out of all proportion to the brief time that has elapsed since their enfranchisement.

Does this mean that Judaism should nurse dreams of ambition, and think of realizing one day that «invisible church of the future» invoked by some in prayer? This would be an illusion, whether on the part of a narrow sectarian, or on that of an enlightened individual. The truth however remains, that the Jewish spirit can still be a factor in this world, making for the highest science, for unending progress; and that the mission of the Bible is not yet complete. The Bible is not responsible for the partial miscarriage of Christianity, due to the compromises made by its organizers, who, in their too great zeal to conquer and convert Paganism, were themselves converted by it. But everything in Christianity which comes in a direct line from Judaism lives, and will live; and it is Judaism which through Christianity has cast into the old polytheistic world, to ferment there until the end of time, the sentiment of unity, and an impatience to bring about charity and justice. The reign of the Bible, and also of the Evangelists in so far as they were inspired by the Bible, can become established only in proportion as the positive religions connected with it lose their power. Great religions outlive their altars and their priests. Hellenism, abolished, counts less skeptics to-day than in the days of Socrates and Anaxagoras. The gods of Homer died when Phidias carved them in marble, and now they are immortally enthroned in the thought and heart of Europe. The Cross may crumble into dust, but there were words spoken under its shadow in Galilee, the echo of which will forever vibrate in the human conscience. And when the nation who made the Bible shall have disappeared,— the race and the cult,— though leaving no visible trace of its passage upon earth, its imprint will remain in the depth of the heart of generations, who will, unconsciously perhaps, live upon what has thus been implanted in their breasts. Humanity, as it is fashioned in the dreams of those who desire to be called freethinkers, may with the lips deny the Bible and its work; but humanity can never deny it in its heart, without the sacrifice of the best that it contains, faith in unity and hope for justice, and without a relapse into the mythology and the «might makes right» of thirty centuries ago.

CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN

(1809–1882)

BY E. RAY LANKESTER

CHARLES ROBERT DARWIN, the great naturalist and author of the «Darwinian theory,» was the son of Dr. Robert Waring Darwin (1766–1848) and grandson of Erasmus Darwin (1731–1802). He was born at Shrewsbury on February 12th, 1809. W. E. Gladstone, Alfred Tennyson, and Abraham Lincoln were born in the same year. Charles Darwin was the youngest of a family of four, having an elder brother and two sisters. He was sent to a day school at Shrewsbury in the year of his mother's death, 1817. At this age he tells us that the passion for «collecting» which leads a man to be a systematic naturalist, a virtuoso, or a miser, was very strong in him, and was clearly innate, as none of his brothers or sisters had this taste. A year later he was removed to the Shrewsbury grammar school, where he profited little by the education in the dead languages administered, and incurred (as even to-day would be the case in English schools) the rebukes of the head-master Butler for «wasting his time» upon such unprofitable subjects as natural history and chemistry, which he pursued «out of school.»

When Charles was sixteen his father sent him to Edinburgh to study medicine, but after two sessions there he was removed and sent to Cambridge (1828) with the intention that he should become a clergyman. In 1831 he took his B. A. degree as what is called a «pass-man.» In those days the injurious system of competitive examinations had not laid hold of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge as it has since, and Darwin quietly took a pass degree whilst studying a variety of subjects of interest to him, without a thought of excelling in an examination. He was fond of all field sports, of dogs and horses, and also spent much time in excursions, collecting and observing with Henslow the professor of botany, and Sedgwick the celebrated geologist. An undergraduate friend of those days has declared that «he was the most genial, warm-hearted, generous and affectionate of friends; his sympathies were with all that was good and true; he had a cordial hatred for everything false, or vile, or cruel, or mean, or dishonorable. He was not only great but pre-eminently good, and just and lovable.»

Through Henslow and the sound advice of his uncle Josiah Wedgwood (the son of the potter of Etruria) he accepted an offer to accompany Captain Fitzroy as naturalist on H. M. S. Beagle, which was to make an extensive surveying expedition. The voyage lasted from December 27th, 1831, to October 2d, 1836. It was, Darwin himself says, «by far the most important event in my life, and has determined my whole career.» He had great opportunities of making explorations on land whilst the ship was engaged in her surveying work in various parts of the southern hemisphere, and made extensive collections of plants and animals, fossil as well as living forms, terrestrial as well as marine. On his return he was busy with the description of these results, and took up his residence in London. His ‘Journal of Researches’ was published in 1839, and is now familiar to many readers in its third edition, published in 1860 under the title ‘A Naturalist's Voyage; Journal of Researches into the Natural History and Geology of the Countries visited during the Voyage of H. M. S. Beagle round the World, under the command of Captain Fitzroy, R. N.’

This was Darwin's first book, and is universally held to be one of the most delightful records of a naturalist's travels ever produced. It is to be placed alongside of Humboldt's ‘Personal Narrative,’ and is the model followed by the authors of other delightful books of travel of a later date, such as Wallace's ‘Malay Archipelago,’ Moseley's ‘Naturalist on the Challenger,’ and Belt's ‘Naturalist in Nicaragua.’ We have given in our selections from Darwin's writings the final pages of ‘A Naturalist's Voyage’ as an example of the style which characterizes the book. In it Darwin shows himself an ardent and profound lover of the luxuriant beauty of nature in the tropics, a kindly observer of men, whether missionaries or savages; an incessant student of natural things—rocks, plants, and animals; and one with a mind so keenly set upon explaining these things and assigning them to their causes, that none of his observations are trivial, but all of value and many of first-rate importance. The book is addressed, as are all of Darwin's books, to the general reader. It seemed to be natural to him to try and explain his observations and reasonings which led to them and followed from them to a wide circle of his fellow-men. The reader at once feels that Darwin is an honest and modest man, who desires his sympathy and seeks for his companionship in the enjoyment of his voyage and the interesting facts and theories gathered by him in distant lands. The quiet unassuming style of the narrative, and the careful explanation of details in such a way as to appeal to those who have little or no knowledge of natural history, gives a charm to the ‘Naturalist's Voyage’ which is possessed in no less a degree by his later books. A writer in the Quarterly Review in 1839 wrote, in reviewing the ‘Naturalist's Voyage,’ of the «charm arising from the freshness of heart which is thrown over these pages of a strong intellectual man and an acute and deep observer.» The places visited in the course of the Beagle's voyage, concerning each of which Darwin has something to say, were the Cape Verd Islands, St. Paul's Rocks, Fernando Noronha, parts of South America, Tierra del Fuego, the Galapagos Islands, the Falkland Islands, Tahiti, New Zealand, Australia, Tasmania, Keeling Island, the Maldives, Mauritius, St. Helena, Ascension. The most important discoveries recorded in the book — also treated at greater length in special scientific memoirs — are the explanation of the ring-like form of coral islands, the geological structure of St. Helena and other islands, and the relation of the living inhabitants — great tortoises, lizards, birds, and various plants — of the various islands of the Galapagos Archipelago to those of South America.

In 1839 (shortly before the publication of his journal) Darwin married his first cousin, Emma Wedgwood, daughter of Josiah Wedgwood of Maer, and in 1842 they took the country-house and little property of Down near Orpington in Kent, which remained his home and the seat of his labors for forty years; that is, until his death on April 19th, 1882. In a letter to his friend Captain Fitzroy of the Beagle, written in 1846, Darwin says, «My life goes on like clockwork, and I am fixed on the spot where I shall end it.» Happily, he was possessed of ample private fortune, and never undertook any teaching work nor gave any of his strength to the making of money. He was able to devote himself entirely to the studies in which he took delight; and though suffering from weak health due to a hereditary form of dyspepsia, he presented the rare spectacle of a man of leisure more fully occupied, more absorbed in constant and exhausting labors, than many a lawyer, doctor, professor, or man of letters. His voyage seems to have satisfied once for all his need for traveling, and his absences from Down were but few and brief during the rest of his life. Here most of his children were born, five sons and three daughters. One little girl died in childhood; the rest grew up around him and remained throughout his life in the closest terms of intimacy and affection with him and their mother. Here he carried on his experiments in greenhouse, garden, and paddock; here he collected his library and wrote his great books. He became a man of well-considered habits and method, carefully arranging his day's occupation so as to give so many hours to noting the results of experiments, so many to writing and reading, and an hour or two to exercise in his grounds or a ride, and playing with his children. Frequently he was stopped for days and even weeks from all intellectual labor by attacks of vomiting and giddiness. Great as were his sufferings on account of ill health, it is not improbable that the retirement of life which was thus forced on him, to a very large extent determined his wonderful assiduity in study and led to the production by him of so many great works.

In later years these attacks were liable to ensue upon prolonged conversation with visitors, if a subject of scientific interest were discussed. His wife, who throughout their long and happy union devoted herself to the care of her husband so as to enable him to do a maximum amount of work with least suffering in health, would come and fetch him away after half an hour's talk, that he might lie down alone in a quiet room. Then after an hour or so he would return with a smile, like a boy released from punishment, and launch again with a merry laugh into talk. Never was there an invalid who bore his maladies so cheerfully, or who made so light of a terrible burden. Although he was frequently seasick during the voyage of the Beagle, he did not attribute his condition in later life in any way to that experience, but to inherited weakness. During the hours passed in his study he found it necessary to rest at intervals, and adopted regularly the plan of writing for an hour and of then lying down for half an hour, whilst his wife or daughter read to him a novel! After half an hour he would again resume his work, and again after an hour return to the novel. In this way he got through the greater part of the circulating libraries' contents. He declared that he had no taste for literature, but liked a story, especially about a pretty girl; and he would only read those in which all ended well. Authors of stories ending in death and failure ought, he declared, to be hung!

He rarely went to London, on account of his health, and consequently kept up a very large correspondence with scientific friends, especially with Lyell, Hooker, and Huxley. He made it a rule to preserve every letter he received, and his friends were careful to preserve his; so that in the 'Life and Letters' published after his death by his son Frank—who in later years lived with his father and assisted him in his work—we have a most interesting record of the progress of his speculations, as well as a delightful revelation of his beautiful character. His house was large enough to accommodate several guests at a time; and it was his delight to receive here for a week's end not only his old friends and companions, but younger naturalists, and others, the companions of his sons and daughters. Over six feet in height, with a slight stoop of his high shoulders, with a brow of unparalleled development overshadowing his merry blue eyes, and a long gray beard and mustache,—he presented the ideal picture of a natural philosopher. His bearing was, however, free from all pose of superior wisdom or authority. The most charming and unaffected gayety, and an eager innate courtesy and goodness of heart, were its dominant notes. His personality was no less fascinating and rare in quality than are the immortal products of his intellect.

The history of the great works which Darwin produced, and especially of his theory of the Origin of Species, is best given in his own words. The passage which is here referred to is a portion of an autobiographical sketch written by him in 1876, not for publication but for the use of his family, and is printed in the 'Life and Letters.' Taken together with the statement as to his views on religion, it gives a great insight both into the character and mental quality of the writer. It is especially remarkable as the attempt of a truly honest and modest man to account for the wonderful height of celebrity and intellectual eminence to which he was no less astonished than pleased to find himself raised. But it also furnishes the reader with an admirable *catalogue raisonné* of his books, arranged in chronological order.

A few more notes as to Darwin's character will help the reader to appreciate his work. His friendships were remarkable, characterized on his side by the warmest and most generous feeling. Henslow, Fitzroy, Lyell, Hooker, and Huxley stand out as his chief friends and correspondents. Henslow was professor of botany at Cambridge, and took Darwin with him when a student there for walks, collecting plants and insects. His admiration for Henslow's character, and his tribute to his fine simplicity and warmth of feeling in matters involving the wrongs of a down-trodden class or cruelty to an individual, are evidence of deep sympathy between the natures of Darwin and his first teacher. Of Fitzroy, the captain of H. M. S. Beagle — with whom he quarreled for a day because Fitzroy defended slavery — Darwin says that he was in many ways the noblest character he ever knew. His love and admiration for Lyell were unbounded. Lyell was the man who taught him the method — the application of the causes at present discoverable in nature to the past history of the earth — by which he was led to the solution of the question as to the origin of organic forms on the earth's surface. He regarded Lyell, who with Mrs. Lyell often visited him at Down, more than any other man as his master and teacher. Hooker — still happily surviving from among this noble group of men — was his «dear old friend»; his most constant and unwearied correspondent; he from whom Darwin could always extract the most valuable facts and opinions in the field of botanical science, and the one upon whose help he always relied. Huxley was for Darwin not merely a delightful and charming friend, but a «wonderful man,»— a most daring, skillful champion, whose feats of literary swordsmanship made Darwin both tremble and rejoice. Samples of his correspondence with these fellow-workers are given below. The letter to Hooker (September 26th, 1862) is particularly interesting, as recording one of the most important discoveries of his later years,—confirmed by the subsequent researches of Gardiner and others,—and as containing a pretty confession of his jealous desire to exalt the *status* of plants. Often he spoke and wrote in his letters of individual plants with which he was experimenting as «little rascals.»

Darwin shared with other great men whose natures approach perfection, an unusual sympathy with and power over dogs, and a love for children. The latter trait is most beautifully expressed in a note which was found amongst his papers, giving an account of his little girl, who died at the age of ten years. Written for his own eyes only, it is a most delicate and tender composition, and should be pondered side by side with his frank and—necessarily to some readers—almost terrifying statement of his thoughts on religion.

Darwin's only self-indulgence was snuff-taking. In later years he smoked an occasional cigarette, but his real «little weakness» was snuff. It is difficult to suppose that he did not benefit by the habit, careful as he was to keep it in check. He kept his snuff-box in the hall of his house, so that he should have to take the trouble of a walk in order to get a pinch, and not have too easy an access to the magic powder.

The impression made on him by his own success and the overwhelming praise and even reverence which he received from all parts of the world, was characteristic of his charming nature. Darwin did not receive these proofs of the triumphs of his views with the solemnity of an inflated reformer who has laid his law upon the whole world of thought. Quite otherwise. He was simply delighted. He chuckled gayly over the spread of his views, almost as a sportsman—and we must remember that in his young days he *was* a sportsman—may rejoice in the triumphs of his own favorite «racer,» or even as a schoolboy may be proud and happy in the success of «the eleven» of which he is captain. He delighted to count up the sale of his books, not specially for the money value it represented, though he was too sensible to be indifferent to that, but because it proved to him that his long and arduous life of thought, experiment, and literary work was not in vain. To have been or to have posed as being indifferent to popular success, would have required a man of less vivid sympathy with his fellow-men; to have been puffed up and pretentious would have needed one less gifted with a sense of humor, less conscious of the littleness of one man, however talented, in the vast procession of life on the earth's surface. His delight in his work and its success was of the perfect and natural kind, which he could communicate to his wife and daughters, and might have been shared by a child.

I, who write of him here, had the great privilege of staying with him from time to time at Down, and I find it difficult to record the strangely mixed feeling of reverential admiration and extreme personal attachment and affection with which I came to regard him. I have never known or heard of a man who combined with such exceptional intellectual power so much cheeriness and love of humor, and such ideal kindness, courtesy, and modesty. Owing to the fact that my father was a naturalist and man of letters, I as a boy knew Henslow and Lyell, Darwin's teachers, and have myself enjoyed a naturalist's walk with the one and the geological discussions of the other. I first saw Darwin himself in 1853, when he was recommended to my boyish imagination as «a man who had ridden up a mountain on the back of a tortoise» (in the Galapagos Islands)! When I began to work at and write on zoölogy he showed his kindness of heart by writing to me in praise of my first book: he wrote to me later in answer to my appeal for guidance, that «physiological experiment on animals is justifiable for real investigation; but not for mere damnable and detestable curiosity. It is a subject which makes me sick with horror, so I will not say another word about it, else I shall not sleep to-night.» When I prosecuted Slade the spiritualistic impostor, and obtained his conviction at Bow Street as a common rogue, Darwin was much interested, and after the affair was over wrote to say that he was sure that I had been at great expense in effecting what he considered to be a public benefit, and that he should like to be allowed to contribute ten pounds to the cost of the prosecution. He was ever ready in this way to help by timely gifts of money what he thought to be a good cause, as for instance in the erection of the Zoölogical Station of Naples by Dr. Anton Dohrn, to which he gave a hundred pounds. His most characteristic minor trait which I remember, was his sitting in his drawing-room at Down in his high-seated arm-chair, and whilst laughing at some story or joke, slapping his thigh with his right hand and exclaiming, with a quite innocent and French freedom of speech, «O my God! That's very good. That's capital.» Perhaps one of the most interesting things that I ever heard him say was when, after describing to me an experiment in which he had placed under a bell-jar some pollen from a male flower, together with an unfertilized female flower, in order to see whether, when kept at a distance but under the same jar, the one would act in any way on the other, he remarked:—«That's a fool's experiment. But I love fools' experiments. I am always making them.» A great deal might be written as comment on that statement. Perhaps the thoughts which it suggests may be summed up by the proposition that even a wise experiment when made by a fool generally leads to a false conclusion, but that fools' experiments conducted by a genius often prove to be leaps through the dark into great discoveries.

As examples of Darwin's writings I have chosen, in addition to those already mentioned, certain passages from his great book on the 'Origin of Species,' in which he explains what he understands by the terms «Natural Selection» and the «Struggle for Existence.» These terms invented by Darwin — but specially the latter — have become «household words.» The history of his thoughts on the subject of the Origin of Species is given in the account of his books, written by himself and already referred to. His letter to Professor Asa Gray (September 5th, 1857) is a most valuable brief exposition of his theory and an admirable sample of his correspondence. The distinguished American botanist was one of his most constant correspondents and a dear personal friend.

I have also given as an extract the final pages of the 'Origin of Species,' in which Darwin eloquently defends the view of nature to which his theory leads. A similar and important passage on the subject of 'Creative Design' is also given: it is taken from that wonderful collection of facts and arguments published by Darwin under the title of 'The Variation of Plants and Animals under Domestication.' It cannot be too definitely stated, as Darwin himself insisted, that his theory of the Origin of Species is essentially an extension of the argument used by Lyell in his 'Principles of Geology.' Just as Lyell accounted for the huge masses of stratified rocks, the upheaved mountain chains, the deep valleys, and the shifting seas of the earth's surface, by adducing the long-continued cumulative action of causes which are at this present moment in operation and can be observed and measured at the present day: so Darwin demonstrates that natural variation, and consequent selection by «breeders» and «fanciers» at the present day, give rise to new forms of plants and animals; and that the cumulative, long-continued action of *Natural* Selection in the Struggle for Existence, or the survival of favorable variations, can and must have effected changes, the magnitude of which is only limited by the length of time during which the process has been going on.

The style of Darwin's writings is remarkable for the absence of all affectation, of all attempt at epigram, literary allusion, or rhetoric. In this it is admirably suited to its subject. At the same time there is no sacrifice of clearness to brevity, nor are technical terms used in place of ordinary language. The greatest pains are obviously given by the author to enable his reader to thoroughly understand the matter in hand. Further, the reader is treated not only with this courtesy of full explanation, but with extreme fairness and modesty. Darwin never slurs over a difficulty nor minimizes it. He states objections and awkward facts prominently, and without shirking proceeds to deal with them by citation of experiment or observation carried out by him for the purpose. His modesty towards his reader is a delightful characteristic. He simply desires to persuade you as one reasonable friend may persuade another. He never thrusts a conclusion nor even a step towards a conclusion upon you, by a demand for your confidence in him as an authority, or by an unfair weighting of the arguments which he balances, or by a juggle of word-play. The consequence is that though Darwin himself thought he had no literary ability, and labored over and re-wrote his sentences, we have in his works a model of clear exposition of a great argument, and the most remarkable example of persuasive style in the English language — persuasive because of its transparent honesty and scrupulous moderation.

Darwin enjoyed rather better health in the last ten years of his life than before, and was able to work and write constantly. For some four months before his death, but not until then, it was evident that his heart was seriously diseased. He died on April 19th, 1882, at the age of seventy-three. Almost his last words were, «I am not the least afraid to die.» In 1879 he added to the manuscript of his autobiography already referred to, these words:—«As for myself, I believe that I have acted rightly in steadily following and devoting my life to Science. I feel no remorse from having committed any great sin, but have often and often regretted that I have not done more direct good to my fellow-creatures.»

From his early manhood to old age, the desire to do what was right determined the employment of his powers. He has done to his fellow-creatures an imperishable good, in leaving to them his writings and the example of his noble life.

E. Ray Lankester

IMPRESSIONS OF TRAVEL

From ‹A Naturalist's Voyage›

Among the scenes which are deeply impressed on my mind, none exceed in sublimity the primeval forests undefaced by the hand of man; whether those of Brazil, where the powers of Life are predominant, or those of Tierra del Fuego, where Death and Decay prevail. Both are temples filled with the varied productions of the God of Nature; no one can stand in these solitudes unmoved, and not feel that there is more in man than the mere breath of his body. In calling up images of the past, I find that the plains of Patagonia frequently cross before my eyes; yet these plains are pronounced by all wretched and useless. They can be described only by negative characters: without habitations, without water, without trees, without mountains, they support merely a few dwarf plants. Why then—and the case is not peculiar to myself—have these arid wastes taken so firm a hold on my memory? Why have not the still more level, the greener and more fertile pampas, which are serviceable to mankind, produced an equal impression? I can scarcely analyze these feelings; but it must be partly owing to the free scope given to the imagination. The plains of Patagonia are boundless, for they are scarcely passable, and hence unknown; they bear the stamp of having lasted, as they are now, for ages, and there appears no limit to their duration through future time. If, as the ancients supposed, the flat earth was surrounded by an impassable breadth of water, or by deserts heated to an intolerable excess, who would not look at these last boundaries to man's knowledge with deep but ill-defined sensations?

Lastly, of natural scenery, the views from lofty mountains, though certainly in one sense not beautiful, are very memorable. When looking down from the highest crest of the Cordillera, the mind, undisturbed by minute details, was filled with the stupendous dimensions of the surrounding masses.

Of individual objects, perhaps nothing is more certain to create astonishment than the first sight in his native haunt of a barbarian—of man in his lowest and most savage state. One's mind hurries back over past centuries, and then asks: Could our progenitors have been men like these? men whose very signs and expressions are less intelligible to us than those of the domesticated animals; men who do not possess the instinct of those animals, nor yet appear to boast of human reason, or at least of arts consequent on that reason. I do not believe it is possible to describe or paint the difference between savage and civilized man. It is the difference between a wild and tame animal; and part of the interest in beholding a savage is the same which would lead every one to desire to see the lion in his desert, the tiger tearing his prey in the jungle, or the rhinoceros wandering over the wild plains of Africa.

Among the other most remarkable spectacles which we have beheld may be ranked the Southern Cross, the cloud of Magellan, and the other constellations of the southern hemisphere — the water-spout — the glacier leading its blue stream of ice, overhanging the sea in a bold precipice — a lagoon island raised by the reef-building corals — an active volcano — and the overwhelming effects of a violent earthquake. These latter phenomena perhaps possess for me a peculiar interest, from their intimate connection with the geological structure of the world. The earthquake, however, must be to every one a most impressive event: the earth, considered from our earliest childhood as the type of solidity, has oscillated like a thin crust beneath our feet; and in seeing the labored works of man in a moment overthrown, we feel the insignificance of his boasted power.

It has been said that the love of the chase is an inherent delight in man — a relic of an instinctive passion. If so, I am sure the pleasure of living in the open air, with the sky for a roof and the ground for a table, is part of the same feeling; it is the savage returning to his wild and native habits. I always look back to our boat cruises and my land journeys, when through unfrequented countries, with an extreme delight, which no scenes of civilization could have created. I do not doubt that every traveler must remember the glowing sense of happiness which he experienced when he first breathed in a foreign clime, where the civilized man had seldom or never trod.

There are several other sources of enjoyment in a long voyage which are of a more reasonable nature. The map of the world ceases to be a blank; it becomes a picture full of the most varied and animated figures. Each part assumes its proper dimensions; continents are not looked at in the light of islands, or islands considered as mere specks, which are in truth larger than many kingdoms of Europe. Africa, or North and South America, are well-sounding names, and easily pronounced; but it is not until having sailed for weeks along small portions of their shores that one is thoroughly convinced what vast spaces on our immense world these names imply.

From seeing the present state, it is impossible not to look forward with high expectations to the future progress of nearly an entire hemisphere. The march of improvement consequent on the introduction of Christianity throughout the South Sea probably stands by itself in the records of history. It is the more striking when we remember that only sixty years since, Cook, whose excellent judgment none will dispute, could foresee no prospect of a change. Yet these changes have now been effected by the philanthropic spirit of the British nation.

In the same quarter of the globe Australia is rising, or indeed may be said to have risen, into a grand centre of civilization, which at some not very remote period will rule as empress over the southern hemisphere. It is impossible for an Englishman to behold these distant colonies without a high pride and satisfaction. To hoist the British flag seems to draw with it, as a certain consequence, wealth, prosperity, and civilization.

In conclusion, it appears to me that nothing can be more improving to a young naturalist than a journey in distant countries. It both sharpens and partly allays that want and craving which, as Sir J. Herschel remarks, a man experiences although every corporeal sense be fully satisfied. The excitement from the novelty of objects, and the chance of success, stimulate him to increased activity. Moreover, as a number of isolated facts soon become uninteresting, the habit of comparison leads to generalization. On the other hand, as the traveler stays but a short time in each place, his descriptions must generally consist of mere sketches instead of detailed observations. Hence arises, as I have found to my cost, a constant tendency to fill up the wide gaps of knowledge by inaccurate and superficial hypotheses.

But I have too deeply enjoyed the voyage not to recommend any naturalist,— although he must not expect to be so fortunate in his companions as I have been,— to take all chances, and to start, on travels by land if possible, if otherwise on a long voyage. He may feel assured he will meet with no difficulties or dangers, excepting in rare cases, nearly so bad as he beforehand anticipates. In a moral point of view the effect ought to be to teach him good-humored patience, freedom from selfishness, the habit of acting for himself, and of making the best of every occurrence. In short, he ought to partake of the characteristic qualities of most sailors. Traveling ought also to teach him distrust; but at the same time he will discover how many truly kind-hearted people there are with whom he never before had, or ever again will have, any further communication, who yet are ready to offer him the most disinterested assistance.

THE GENESIS OF ‹THE ORIGIN OF SPECIES›

From ‹Life and Letters›

After several fruitless searches in Surrey and elsewhere, we found this house and purchased it. I was pleased with the diversified appearance of vegetation proper to a chalk district, and so unlike what I had been accustomed to in the Midland counties; and still more pleased with the extreme quietness and rusticity of the place. It is not however quite so retired a place as a writer in a German periodical makes it, who says that my house can be approached only by a mule-track! Our fixing ourselves here has answered admirably in one way which we did not anticipate,—namely, by being very convenient for frequent visits from our children.

Few persons can have lived a more retired life than we have done. Besides short visits to the houses of relations, and occasionally to the seaside or elsewhere, we have gone nowhere. During the first part of our residence we went a little into society, and received a few friends here; but my health almost always suffered from the excitement, violent shivering and vomiting attacks being thus brought on. I have therefore been compelled for many years to give up all dinner parties; and this has been somewhat of a deprivation to me, as such parties always put me into high spirits. From the same cause I have been able to invite here very few scientific acquaintances. . . .

During the voyage of the Beagle I had been deeply impressed by discovering in the Pampean formation great fossil animals, covered with armor like that on the existing armadillos; secondly, by the manner in which closely allied animals replace one another in proceeding southwards over the Continent; and thirdly, by the South-American character of most of the productions of the Galapagos Archipelago, and more especially by the manner in which they differ slightly on each island of the group; none of the islands appearing to be very ancient in a geological sense.

It was evident that such facts as these, as well as many others, could only be explained on the supposition that species gradually become modified; and the subject haunted me. But it was equally evident that neither the action of the surrounding conditions, nor the will of the organisms (especially in the case of plants), could account for the innumerable cases in which organisms of every kind are beautifully adapted to their habits of life; for instance, a woodpecker or a tree-frog to climb trees, or a seed for dispersal by hooks or plumes. I had always been much struck by such adaptations, and until these could be explained it seemed to me almost useless to endeavor to prove by indirect evidence that species have been modified.

After my return to England it appeared to me that by following the example of Lyell in Geology, and by collecting all facts which bore in any way on the variation of animals and plants under domestication and nature, some light might perhaps be thrown on the whole subject. My first note-book was opened in July 1837. I worked on true Baconian principles; and without any theory collected facts on a wholesale scale, more especially with respect to domesticated productions, by printed inquiries, by conversation with skillful breeders and gardeners, and by extensive reading. When I see the list of books of all kinds which I read and abstracted, including whole series of Journals and Transactions, I am surprised at my industry. I soon perceived that selection was the keystone of man's success in making useful races of animals and plants. But how selection could be applied to organisms living in a state of nature, remained for some time a mystery to me.

In October 1838—that is, fifteen months after I had begun my systematic inquiry—I happened to read for amusement 'Malthus on Population'; and being well prepared to appreciate the struggle for existence which everywhere goes on from long-continued observation of the habits of animals and plants, it at once struck me that under these circumstances favorable variations would tend to be preserved, and unfavorable ones to be destroyed. The result of this would be the formation of new species. Here then I had at last got a theory by which to work; but I was so anxious to avoid prejudice that I determined not for some time to write even the briefest sketch of it. In June 1842 I first allowed myself the satisfaction of writing a very brief abstract of my theory in pencil in thirty-five pages; and this was enlarged during the summer of 1844 into one of two hundred and thirty pages, which I had fairly copied out and still possess.

But at that time I overlooked one problem of great importance; and it is astonishing to me, except on the principle of Columbus and his egg, how I could have overlooked it and its solution. This problem is the tendency in organic beings descended from the same stock to diverge in character as they become modified. That they have diverged greatly is obvious from the manner in which species of all kinds can be classed under genera, genera under families, families under sub-orders, and so forth: and I can remember the very spot in the road, whilst in my carriage, when to my joy the solution occurred to me; and this was long after I had come to Down. The solution, as I believe, is that the modified offspring of all dominant and increasing forms tend to become adapted to many and highly diversified places in the economy of nature.

Early in 1856 Lyell advised me to write out my views pretty fully, and I began at once to do so on a scale three or four times as extensive as that which was afterwards followed in my 'Origin of Species'; yet it was only an abstract of the materials which I had collected, and I got through about half the work on this scale. But my plans were overthrown, for early in the summer of 1858 Mr. Wallace, who was then in the Malay Archipelago, sent me an essay 'On the Tendency of Varieties to depart Indefinitely from the Original Type'; and this essay contained exactly the same theory as mine. Mr. Wallace expressed the wish that if I thought well of his essay, I should send it to Lyell for perusal.

The circumstances under which I consented, at the request of Lyell and Hooker, to allow of an abstract from my MS., together with a letter to Asa Gray dated September 5th 1857, to be published at the same time with Wallace's essay, are given in the 'Journal of the Proceedings of the Linnean Society,' 1858, page 45. I was at first very unwilling to consent, as I thought Mr. Wallace might consider my doing so unjustifiable, for I did not then know how generous and noble was his disposition. The extract from my MS. and the letter to Asa Gray had neither been intended for publication, and were badly written. Mr. Wallace's essay, on the other hand, was admirably expressed and quite clear. Nevertheless, our joint productions excited very little attention, and the only published notice of them which I can remember was by Professor Haughton of Dublin, whose verdict was that all that was new in them was false, and what was true was old. This shows how necessary it is that any new view should be explained at considerable length in order to arouse public attention. . . .

My habits are methodical, and this has been of not a little use for my particular line of work. Lastly, I have had ample leisure from not having to earn my own bread. Even ill health, though it has annihilated several years of my life, has saved me from the distractions of society and amusement.

Therefore my success as a man of science, whatever this may have amounted to, has been determined as far as I can judge by complex and diversified mental qualities and conditions. Of these, the most important have been the love of science, unbounded patience in long reflecting over any subject, industry in observing and collecting facts, and a fair share of invention as well as of common-sense. With such moderate abilities as I possess, it is truly surprising that I should have influenced to a considerable extent the belief of scientific men on some important points.

CURIOUS ATROPHY OF ÆSTHETIC TASTE

From ‹Life and Letters›

There seems to be a sort of fatality in my mind, leading me to put at first my statement or proposition in a wrong or awkward form. Formerly I used to think about my sentences before writing them down; but for several years I have found that it saves time to scribble in a vile hand whole pages as quickly as I possibly can, contracting half the words; and then correct deliberately. Sentences thus scribbled down are often better ones than I could have written deliberately.

Having said thus much about my manner of writing, I will add that with my large books I spend a good deal of time over the general arrangement of the matter. I first make the rudest outline in two or three pages, and then a larger one in several pages, a few words or one word standing for a whole discussion or a series of facts. Each one of these headings is again enlarged and often transferred before I begin to write *in extenso.* As in several of my books facts observed by others have been very extensively used, and as I have always had several quite distinct subjects in hand at the same time, I may mention that I keep from thirty to forty large portfolios in cabinets with labeled shelves, into which I can at once put a detached reference or memorandum. I have bought many books, and at their ends I make an index of all the facts that concern my work; or if the book is not my own, write out a separate abstract, and of such abstracts I have a large drawer full. Before beginning on any subject I look to all the short indexes and make a general and classified index, and by taking the one or more proper portfolios, I have all the information collected during my life ready for use.

I have said that in one respect my mind has changed during the last twenty or thirty years. Up to the age of thirty, or beyond it, poetry of many kinds, such as the works of Milton, Gray, Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, gave me great pleasure; and even as a schoolboy I took intense delight in Shakespeare, especially in the historical plays. I have also said that formerly pictures gave me considerable, and music very great delight. But now for many years I cannot endure to read a line of poetry: I have tried lately to read Shakespeare, and found it so intolerably dull that it nauseated me. I have also almost lost my taste for pictures or music. Music generally sets me thinking too energetically on what I have been at work on, instead of giving me pleasure. I retain some taste for fine scenery, but it does not cause me the exquisite delight which it formerly did. On the other hand, novels which are works of the imagination, though not of a very high order, have been for years a wonderful relief and pleasure to me, and I often bless all novelists. A surprising number have been read aloud to me, and I like all if moderately good, and if they do not end unhappily — against which a law ought to be passed. A novel, according to my taste, does not come into the first class unless it contains some person whom one can thoroughly love, and if a pretty woman, all the better.

This curious and lamentable loss of the higher æsthetic tastes is all the odder, as books on history, biographies, and travels (independently of any scientific facts which they may contain), and essays on all sorts of subjects, interest me as much as ever they did. My mind seems to have become a kind of machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts; but why this should have caused the atrophy of that part of the brain alone on which the higher tastes depend, I cannot conceive. A man with a mind more highly organized or better constituted than mine would not, I suppose, have thus suffered:

and if I had to live my life again, I would have made a rule to read some poetry and listen to some music at least once every week; for perhaps the parts of my brain now atrophied would thus have been kept active through use. The loss of these tastes is a loss of happiness, and may possibly be injurious to the intellect, and more probably to the moral character, by enfeebling the emotional part of our nature.

PRIVATE MEMORANDUM CONCERNING HIS LITTLE DAUGHTER

From ‹Life and Letters›

OUR poor child Annie was born in Gower Street on March 2d, 1841, and expired at Malvern at midday on the 23d of April, 1851.

I write these few pages, as I think in after years, if we live, the impressions now put down will recall more vividly her chief characteristics. From whatever point I look back at her, the main feature in her disposition which at once rises before me is her buoyant joyousness, tempered by two other characteristics; namely, her sensitiveness, which might easily have been overlooked by a stranger, and her strong affection. Her joyousness and animal spirits radiated from her whole countenance, and rendered every movement elastic and full of life and vigor. It was delightful and cheerful to behold her. Her dear face now rises before me, as she used sometimes to come running down-stairs with a stolen pinch of snuff for me, her whole form radiant with the pleasure of giving pleasure. Even when playing with her cousins, when her joyousness almost passed into boisterousness, a single glance of my eye, not of displeasure (for I thank God I hardly ever cast one on her), but of want of sympathy, would for some minutes alter her whole countenance.

The other point in her character, which made her joyousness and spirits so delightful, was her strong affection, which was of a most clinging, fondling nature. When quite a baby this showed itself in never being easy without touching her mother when in bed with her; and quite lately she would, when poorly, fondle for any length of time one of her mother's arms. When very unwell, her mother lying down beside her seemed to soothe her in a manner quite different from what it would have done to any of our other children. So again she would at almost any time spend half an hour in arranging my hair, «making it,» as she called it, «beautiful,» or in smoothing, the poor dear darling! my collar or cuffs—in short, in fondling me.

Besides her joyousness thus tempered, she was in her manners remarkably cordial, frank, open, straightforward, natural, and without any shade of reserve. Her whole mind was pure and transparent. One felt one knew her thoroughly and could trust her. I always thought that come what might, we should have had in our old age at least one loving soul which nothing could have changed. All her movements were vigorous, active, and usually graceful. When going round the Sand-walk with me, although I walked fast, yet she often used to go before, pirouetting in the most elegant way, her dear face bright all the time with the sweetest smiles. Occasionally she had a pretty coquettish manner towards me, the memory of which is charming. She often used exaggerated language, and when I quizzed her by exaggerating what she had said, how clearly can I now see the little toss of the head, and exclamation of «Oh, papa, what a shame of you!» In the last short illness, her conduct in simple truth was angelic. She never once complained; never became fretful; was ever considerate of others, and was thankful in the most gentle, pathetic manner for everything done for her. When so exhausted that she could hardly speak, she praised everything that was given her, and said some tea «was beautifully good.» When I gave her some water she said, «I quite thank you;» and these I believe were the last precious words ever addressed by her dear lips to me.

We have lost the joy of the household and the solace of our old age. She must have known how we loved her. Oh that she could now know how deeply, how tenderly, we do still and shall ever love her dear joyous face! Blessings on her!

April 30th, 1851.

RELIGIOUS VIEWS

From ‹Life and Letters›

I AM much engaged, an old man, and out of health, and I cannot spare time to answer your questions fully,—nor indeed can they be answered. Science has nothing to do with Christ, except in so far as the habit of scientific research makes a man cautious in admitting evidence. For myself, I do not believe that there ever has been any revelation. As for a future life, every man must judge for himself between conflicting vague probabilities. . . .

During these two years [October 1836 to January 1839] I was led to think much about religion.

Whilst on board the Beagle I was quite orthodox, and I remember being heartily laughed at by several of the officers (though themselves orthodox) for quoting the Bible as an unanswerable authority on some point of morality. I suppose it was the novelty of the argument that amused them. But I had gradually come by this time—*i. e.*, 1836 to 1839—to see that the Old Testament was no more to be trusted than the sacred books of the Hindoos. The question then continually rose before my mind and would not be banished,—is it credible that if God were now to make a revelation to the Hindoos, he would permit it to be connected with the belief in Vishnu, Siva, etc., as Christianity is connected with the Old Testament? This appeared to me utterly incredible.

By further reflecting that the clearest evidence would be requisite to make any sane man believe in the miracles by which Christianity is supported,—and that the more we know of the fixed laws of nature the more incredible do miracles become,—that the men at that time were ignorant and credulous to a degree almost incomprehensible by us,—that the Gospels cannot be proved to have been written simultaneously with the events,—that they differ in many important details, far too important, as it seemed to me, to be admitted as the usual inaccuracies of eye-witnesses;—by such reflections as these, which I give not as having the least novelty or value, but as they influenced me,—I gradually came to disbelieve in Christianity as a divine revelation. The fact that many false religions have spread over large portions of the earth like wild-fire had some weight with me.

But I was very unwilling to give up my belief; I feel sure of this, for I can well remember often and often inventing day-dreams of old letters between distinguished Romans, and manuscripts being discovered at Pompeii or elsewhere, which confirmed in the most striking manner all that was written in the Gospels. But I found it more and more difficult, with free scope given to my imagination, to invent evidence which would suffice to convince me. Thus disbelief crept over me at a very slow rate, but was at last complete. The rate was so slow that I felt no distress.

Although I did not think much about the existence of a personal God until a considerably later period of my life, I will here give the vague conclusions to which I have been driven. The old argument from design in Nature, as given by Paley, which formerly seemed to me so conclusive, fails, now that the law of natural selection has been discovered. We can no longer argue that for instance the beautiful hinge of a bivalve shell must have been made by an intelligent being, like the hinge of a door by man. There seems to be no more design in the variability of organic beings, and in the action of natural selection, than in the course which the wind blows. But I have discussed this subject at the end of my book on the 'Variations of Domesticated Animals and Plants'; and the argument there given has never, as far as I can see, been answered.

But passing over the endless beautiful adaptations which we everywhere meet with, it may be asked, How can the generally beneficent arrangement of the world be accounted for? Some writers indeed are so much impressed with the amount of suffering in the world, that they doubt, if we look to all sentient beings, whether there is more of misery or of happiness; whether the world as a whole is a good or bad one. According to my judgment happiness decidedly prevails, though this would be very difficult to prove. If the truth of this conclusion be granted, it harmonizes well with the effects which we might expect from natural selection. If all the individuals of any species were habitually to suffer to an extreme degree, they would neglect to propagate their kind; but we have no reason to believe that this has ever, or at least often, occurred. Some other considerations moreover lead to the belief that all sentient beings have been formed so as to enjoy, as a general rule, happiness.

Every one who believes as I do, that all the corporeal and mental organs (excepting those which are neither advantageous nor disadvantageous to the possessor) of all beings have been developed through natural selection, or the survival of the fittest, together with use or habit, will admit that these organs have been formed so that their possessors may compete successfully with other beings, and thus increase in number. Now an animal may be led to pursue that course of action which is most beneficial to the species by suffering, such as pain, hunger, thirst, and fear; or by pleasure, as in eating and drinking, and in the propagation of the species, etc.; or by both means combined, as in the search for food. But pain or suffering of any kind, if long continued, causes depression and lessens the power of action, yet is well adapted to make a creature guard itself against any great or sudden evil. Pleasurable sensations, on the other hand, may be long continued without any depressing effect; on the contrary, they stimulate the whole system to increased action. Hence it has come to pass that most or all sentient beings have been developed in such a manner, through natural selection, that pleasurable sensations serve as their habitual guides. We see this in the pleasure from exertion, even occasionally from great exertion of the body or mind,—in the pleasure of our daily meals, and especially in the pleasure derived from sociability, and from loving our families. The sum of such pleasures as these, which are habitual or frequently recurrent, give, as I can hardly doubt, to most sentient beings an excess of happiness over misery, although many occasionally suffer much. Such suffering is quite compatible with the belief in natural selection, which is not perfect in its action, but tends only to render each species as successful as possible in the battle for life with other species, in wonderfully complex and changing circumstances.

That there is much suffering in the world, no one disputes. Some have attempted to explain this with reference to man by imagining that it serves for his moral improvement. But the number of men in the world is as nothing compared with that of all other sentient beings, and they often suffer greatly without any moral improvement. This very old argument from the existence of suffering against the existence of an intelligent First Cause seems to me a strong one; whereas, as just remarked, the presence of much suffering agrees well with the view that all organic beings have been developed through variation and natural selection.

At the present day, the most usual argument for the existence of an intelligent God is drawn from the deep inward conviction and feelings which are experienced by most persons.

Formerly I was led by feelings such as those just referred to (although I do not think that the religious sentiment was ever strongly developed in me), to the firm conviction of the existence of God and of the immortality of the soul. In my Journal I wrote that whilst standing in the midst of the grandeur of a Brazilian forest, «it is not possible to give an adequate idea of the higher feelings of wonder, admiration, and devotion, which fill and elevate the mind.» I well remember my conviction that there is more in man than the mere breath of his body. But now the grandest scenes would not cause any such convictions and feelings to rise in my mind. It may be truly said that I am like a man who has become color-blind, and the universal belief by men of the existence of redness makes my present loss of perception of not the least value as evidence. This argument would be a valid one if all men of all races had the same inward conviction of the existence of one God; but we know that this is very far from being the case. Therefore I cannot see that such inward convictions and feelings are of any weight as evidence of what really exists. The state of mind which grand scenes formerly excited in me, and which was intimately connected with a belief in God, did not essentially differ from that which is often called the sense of sublimity; and however difficult it may be to explain the genesis of this sense, it can hardly be advanced as an argument for the existence of God, any more than the powerful though vague and similar feelings excited by music.

With respect to immortality, nothing shows me [so clearly] how strong and almost instinctive a belief it is, as the consideration of the view now held by most physicists, namely, that the sun with all the planets will in time grow too cold for life, unless indeed some great body dashes into the sun, and thus gives it fresh life. Believing as I do that man in the distant future will be a far more perfect creature than he now is, it is an intolerable thought that he and all other sentient beings are doomed to complete annihilation after such long-continued slow progress. To those who fully admit the immortality of the human soul, the destruction of our world will not appear so dreadful.

Another source of conviction in the existence of God, connected with the reason, and not with the feelings, impresses me as having much more weight. This follows from the extreme difficulty or rather impossibility of conceiving this immense and wonderful universe, including man, with his capacity of looking far backward and far into futurity, as the result of blind chance or necessity. When thus reflecting I feel compelled to look to a First Cause, having an intelligent mind in some degree analogous to that of man; and I deserve to be called a Theist. This conclusion was strong in my mind about the time, as far as I can remember, when I wrote the 'Origin of Species'; and it is since that time that it has very gradually, with many fluctuations, become weaker. But then arises the doubt: Can the mind of man, which has, as I fully believe, been developed from a mind as low as that possessed by the lowest animals, be trusted when it draws such grand conclusions?

I cannot pretend to throw the least light on such abstruse problems. The mystery of the beginning of all things is insoluble by us; and I for one must be content to remain an Agnostic.

C. DARWIN TO MISS JULIA WEDGWOOD: ON DESIGN

From 'Life and Letters'

JULY 11th [1861].

SOME one has sent us 'Macmillan,' and I must tell you how much I admire your article; though at the same time I must confess that I could not clearly follow you in some parts, which probably is in main part due to my not being at all accustomed to metaphysical trains of thought. I think that you understand my book perfectly, and that I find a very rare event with my critics. The ideas in the last page have several times vaguely crossed my mind. Owing to several correspondents I have been led lately to think, or rather to try to think, over some of the chief points discussed by you. But the result has been with me a maze — something like thinking on the origin of evil, to which you allude. The mind refuses to look at this universe, being what it is, without having been designed; yet where one would most expect design,—viz., in the structure of a sentient being,—the more I think on the subject, the less I can see proof of design. Asa Gray and some others look at each variation, or at least at each beneficial variation (which A. Gray would compare with the rain-drops which do not fall on the sea, but on to the land to fertilize it), as having been providentially designed. Yet when I asked him whether he looks at each variation in the rock-pigeon, by which man has made by accumulation a pouter or fantail pigeon, as providentially designed for man's amusement, he does not know what to answer; and if he or any one admits [that] these variations are accidental, as far as purpose is concerned (of course not accidental as to their cause or origin), then I can see no reason why he should rank the accumulated variations by which the beautifully adapted woodpecker has been formed, as providentially designed. For it would be easy to imagine the enlarged crop of the pouter, or tail of the fantail, as of some use to birds in a state of nature, having peculiar habits of life. These are the considerations which perplex me about design; but whether you will care to hear them, I know not. . . .

[On the subject of design, he wrote (July 1860) to Dr. Gray:—]

One word more on «designed laws» and «undesigned results.» I see a bird which I want for food, take my gun and kill it; I do this *designedly*. An innocent and good man stands under a tree and is killed by a flash of lightning. Do you believe (and I really should like to hear) that God *designedly* killed this man? Many or most persons do believe this; I can't and don't. If you believe so, do you believe that when a swallow snaps up a gnat, that God designed that that particular swallow should snap up that particular gnat at that particular instant? I believe that the man and the gnat are in the same predicament. If the death of neither man nor gnat is designed, I see no good reason to believe that their *first* birth or production should be necessarily designed.

CORRESPONDENCE

From 'The Life and Letters'

C. DARWIN TO J. D. HOOKER

DOWN, February 24th [1863].

My Dear Hooker:

I AM astonished at your note. I have not seen the Athenæum, but I have sent for it, and may get it to-morrow; and will then say what I think.

I have read Lyell's book ['The Antiquity of Man']. The whole certainly struck me as a compilation, but of the highest class; for when possible the facts have been verified on the spot, making it almost an original work. The Glacial chapters seem to me best, and in parts magnificent. I could hardly judge about Man, as all the gloss of novelty was completely worn off. But certainly the aggregation of the evidence produced a very striking effect on my mind. The chapter comparing language and changes of species seems most ingenious and interesting. He has shown great skill in picking out salient points in the argument for change of species; but I am deeply disappointed (I do not mean personally) to find that his timidity prevents him giving any judgment. . . . From all my communications with him, I must ever think that he has really entirely lost faith in the immutability of species; and yet one of his strongest sentences is nearly as follows: "If it should *ever* be rendered highly probable that species change by variation and natural selection," etc., etc. I had hoped he would have guided the public as far as his own belief went. . . . One thing does please me on this subject, that he seems to appreciate your work. No doubt the public or a part may be induced to think that as he gives to us a larger space than to Lamarck, he must think there is something in our views. When reading the brain chapter, it struck me forcibly that if he had said openly that he believed in change of species, and as a consequence that man was derived from some quadrumanous animal, it would have been very proper to have discussed by compilation the differences in the most important organ, viz., the brain. As it is, the chapter seems to me to come in rather by the head and shoulders. I do not think (but then I am as prejudiced as Falconer and Huxley, or more so) that it is too severe. It struck me as given with judicial force. It might perhaps be said with truth that he had no business to judge on a subject on which he knows nothing; but compilers must do this to a certain extent. (You know I value and rank high compilers, being one myself.) I have taken you at your word, and scribbled at great length. If I get the Athenæum to-morrow, I will add my impression of Owen's letter. . . .

The Lyells are coming here on Sunday evening to stay till Wednesday. I dread it, but I must say how much disappointed I am that he has not spoken out on species, still less on man. And the best of the joke is that he thinks he has acted with the courage of a martyr of old. I hope I may have taken an exaggerated view of his timidity, and shall *particularly* be glad of your opinion on this head. When I got his book I turned over the pages, and saw he had discussed the subject of species, and said that I thought he would do more to convert the public than all of us; and now (which makes the case worse for me) I must, in common honesty, retract. I wish to Heaven he had said not a word on the subject.

WEDNESDAY MORNING.—I have read the Athenæum. I do not think Lyell will be nearly so much annoyed as you expect. The concluding sentence is no doubt very stinging. No one but a good anatomist could unravel Owen's letter; at least it is quite beyond me. . . .

Lyell's memory plays him false when he says all anatomists were astonished at Owen's paper: it was often quoted with approbation. I *well* remember Lyell's admiration at this new classification! (Do not repeat this.) I remember it because, though I knew nothing whatever about the brain, I felt a conviction that a classification thus founded on a single character would break down, and it seemed to me a great error not to separate more completely the Marsupialia. . . .

What an accursed evil it is that there should be all this quarreling, within what ought to be the peaceful realms of science.

I will go to my own present subject of inheritance and forget it all for a time. Farewell, my dear old friend.

C. DARWIN.

C. Darwin to T. H. Huxley

October 3d, 1864.

My Dear Huxley:

If I do not pour out my admiration of your article on Kölliker, I shall explode. I never read anything better done. I had much wished his article answered, and indeed thought of doing so myself, so that I considered several points. You have hit on all, and on some in addition, and oh, by Jove, how well you have done it! As I read on and came to point after point on which I had thought, I could not help jeering and scoffing at myself, to see how infinitely better you had done it than I could have done. Well, if any one who does not understand Natural Selection will read this, he will be a blockhead if it is not as clear as daylight. Old Flourens was hardly worth the powder and shot; but how capitally you bring in about the Academician, and your metaphor of the sea-sand is *inimitable.*

It is a marvel to me how you can resist becoming a regular reviewer. Well, I have exploded now, and it has done me a deal of good.

C. Darwin to E. Ray Lankester

Down, March 15th [1870].

My Dear Sir:

I do not know whether you will consider me a very troublesome man, but I have just finished your book, and cannot resist telling you how the whole has much interested me. No doubt, as you say, there must be much speculation on such a subject, and certain results cannot be reached; but all your views are highly suggestive, and to my mind that is high praise. I have been all the more interested, as I am now writing on closely allied though not quite identical points. I was pleased to see you refer to my much despised child, 'Pangenesis,' who I think will some day, under some better nurse, turn out a fine stripling. It has also pleased me to see how thoroughly you appreciate (and I do not think that this is general with the men of science) H. Spencer; I suspect that hereafter he will be looked at as by far the greatest living philosopher in England; perhaps equal to any that have lived. But I have no business to trouble you with my notions. With sincere thanks for the interest which your work has given me, I remain, yours very faithfully,

CH. DARWIN.

FROM A LETTER TO J. D. HOOKER

CLIFF COTTAGE, BOURNEMOUTH, September 26th, 1862.

My Dear Hooker:

DO NOT read this till you have leisure. If that blessed moment ever comes, I should be very glad to have your opinion on the subject of this letter. I am led to the opinion that Drosera must have diffused matter in organic connection, closely analogous to the nervous matter of animals. When the glans of one of the papillæ or tentacles in its natural position is supplied with nitrogenized fluid and certain other stimulants, or when loaded with an extremely slight weight, or when struck several times with a needle, the pedicel bends near its base in under one minute. These varied stimulants are conveyed down the pedicel by some means; it cannot be vibration, for drops of fluid put on quite quietly cause the movement; it cannot be absorption of the fluid from cell to cell, for I can see the rate of absorption, which, though quick, is far slower, and in Dionæa the transmission is instantaneous; analogy from animals would point to transmission through nervous matter. Reflecting on the rapid power of absorption in the glans, the extreme sensibility of the whole organ, and the conspicuous movement caused by varied stimulants, I have tried a number of substances which are not caustic or corrosive, . . . but most of which are known to have a remarkable action on the nervous matter of animals. You will see the results in the inclosed paper. As the nervous matter of different animals is differently acted on by the same poisons, one would not expect the same action on plants and animals; only, if plants have diffused nervous matter, some degree of analogous action. And this is partially the case. Considering these experiments, together with the previously made remarks on the functions of the parts, I cannot avoid the conclusion that Drosera possesses matter at least in some degree analogous in constitution and function to nervous matter. Now do tell me what you think, as far as you can judge from my abstract. Of course many more experiments would have to be tried; but in former years I tried on the whole leaf, instead of on separate glands, a number of innocuous substances, such as sugar, gum, starch, etc., and they produced no effect. Your opinion will aid me in deciding some future year in going on with this subject. I should not have thought it worth attempting, but I had nothing on earth to do.

My dear Hooker, yours very sincerely,

CH. DARWIN.

P. S. — We return home on Monday 28th. Thank Heaven!

THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

From the ‹Origin of Species›

Before entering on the subject of this chapter, I must make a few preliminary remarks, to show how the struggle for existence bears on Natural Selection. It has been seen in the last chapter that amongst organic beings in a state of nature there is some individual variability; indeed, I am not aware that this has ever been disputed. It is immaterial for us whether a multitude of doubtful forms be called species, or sub-species, or varieties; what rank, for instance, the two or three hundred doubtful forms of British plants are entitled to hold, if the existence of any well-marked varieties be admitted. But the mere existence of individual variability and of some few well-marked varieties, though necessary as the foundation for the work, helps us but little in understanding how species arise in nature. How have all those exquisite adaptations of one part of the organization to another part, and to the conditions of life, and of one organic being to another being, been perfected? We see these beautiful co-adaptations most plainly in the woodpecker and the mistletoe; and only a little less plainly in the humblest parasite which clings to the hairs of a quadruped or feathers of a bird; in the structure of the beetle which dives through the water; in the plumed seed which is wafted by the gentlest breeze: in short, we see beautiful adaptations everywhere and in every part of the organic world.

Again, it may be asked, how is it that varieties, which I have called incipient species, become ultimately converted into good and distinct species, which in most cases obviously differ from each other far more than do the varieties of the same species?

How do those groups of species, which constitute what are called distinct genera, and which differ from each other more than do the species of the same genus, arise? All these results, as we shall more fully see in the next chapter, follow from the struggle for life. Owing to this struggle, variations, however slight and from whatever cause proceeding, if they be in any degree profitable to the individuals of a species, in their infinitely complex relations to other organic beings and to their physical conditions of life, will tend to the preservation of such individuals, and will generally be inherited by the offspring. The offspring also will thus have a better chance of surviving; for of the many individuals of any species which are periodically born, but a small number can survive. I have called this principle, by which each slight variation, if useful, is preserved, by the term Natural Selection, in order to mark its relation to man's power of selection. But the expression often used by Mr. Herbert Spencer, of the Survival of the Fittest, is more accurate and is sometimes equally convenient. We have seen that man by selection can certainly produce great results, and can adapt organic beings to his own uses, through the accumulation of slight but useful variations given to him by the hand of Nature. But Natural Selection, as we shall hereafter see, is a power incessantly ready for action, and is as immeasurably superior to man's feeble efforts as the works of Nature are to those of Art.

We will now discuss in a little more detail the struggle for existence. In my future work this subject will be treated, as it well deserves, at greater length. The elder De Candolle and Lyell have largely and philosophically shown that all organic beings are exposed to severe competition. In regard to plants, no one has treated this subject with more spirit and ability than W. Herbert, Dean of Manchester, evidently the result of his great horticultural knowledge. Nothing is easier than to admit in words the truth of the universal struggle for life, or more difficult — at least I have found it so — than constantly to bear this conclusion in mind. Yet unless it be thoroughly ingrained in the mind, the whole economy of nature, with every fact on distribution, rarity, abundance, extinction, and variation, will be dimly seen or quite misunderstood. We behold the face of nature bright with gladness, we often see superabundance of food; we do not see, or we forget, that the birds which are idly singing round us mostly live on insects or seeds, and are thus constantly destroying life; or we forget how largely these songsters, or their eggs, or their nestlings, are destroyed by birds and beasts of prey; we do not always bear in mind that though food may be now superabundant, it is not so at all seasons of each recurring year.

I should premise that I use this term in a large and metaphorical sense, including dependence of one being on another, and including (which is more important) not only the life of the individual, but success in leaving progeny. Two canine animals, in a time of dearth, may be truly said to struggle with each other which shall get food and live. But a plant on the edge of a desert is said to struggle for life against the drought, though more properly it should be said to be dependent on the moisture. A plant which annually produces a thousand seeds, of which only one on an average comes to maturity, may be more truly said to struggle with the plants of the same and other kinds which already clothe the ground. The mistletoe is dependent on the apple and a few other trees, but can only in a far-fetched sense be said to struggle with these trees, for if too many of these parasites grow on the same tree, it languishes and dies. But several seedling mistletoes, growing close together on the same branch, may more truly be said to struggle with each other. As the mistletoe is disseminated by birds, its existence depends on them; and it may metaphorically be said to struggle with other fruit-bearing plants, in tempting the birds to devour and thus disseminate its seeds. In these several senses, which pass into each other, I use for convenience's sake the general term of Struggle for Existence.

THE GEOMETRICAL RATIO OF INCREASE

From ‹Origin of Species›

A STRUGGLE for existence inevitably follows from the high rate at which all organic beings tend to increase. Every being which during its natural lifetime produces several eggs or seeds must suffer destruction during some period of its life, and during some season or occasional year; otherwise, on the principle of geometrical increase, its numbers would quickly become so inordinately great that no country could support the product. Hence, as more individuals are produced than can possibly survive, there must in every case be a struggle for existence, either one individual with another of the same species, or with the individuals of distinct species, or with the physical conditions of life. It is the doctrine of Malthus applied with manifold force to the whole animal and vegetable kingdoms; for in this case there can be no artificial increase of food, and no prudential restraint from marriage. Although some species may be now increasing, more or less rapidly, in numbers, all cannot do so, for the world would not hold them.

There is no exception to the rule that every organic being naturally increases at so high a rate that if not destroyed, the earth would soon be covered by the progeny of a single pair. Even slow-breeding man has doubled in twenty-five years; and at this rate, in less than a thousand years there would literally not be standing-room for his progeny. Linnæus has calculated that if an annual plant produced only two seeds — and there is no plant so unproductive as this — and their seedlings next year produced two, and so on, then in twenty years there would be a million plants. The elephant is reckoned the slowest breeder of all known animals, and I have taken some pains to estimate its probable minimum rate of natural increase; it will be safest to assume that it begins breeding when thirty years old: and goes on breeding till ninety years old, bringing forth six young in the interval, and surviving till one hundred years old: if this be so, after a period of from 740 to 750 years there would be nearly nineteen million elephants alive, descended from the first pair.

But we have better evidence on this subject than mere theoretical calculations, namely, the numerous recorded cases of the astonishingly rapid increase of various animals in a state of nature, when circumstances have been favorable to them during two or three following seasons. Still more striking is the evidence from our domestic animals of many kinds which have run wild in several parts of the world; if the statements of the rate of increase of slow-breeding cattle and horses in South America, and latterly in Australia, had not been well authenticated, they would have been incredible. So it is with plants; cases could be given of introduced plants which have become common throughout whole islands in a period of less than ten years. Several of the plants, such as the cardoon and a tall thistle, which are now the commonest over the wide plains of La Plata, clothing square leagues of surface almost to the exclusion of every other plant, have been introduced from Europe; and there are plants which now range in India, as I hear from Falconer, from Cape Comorin to the Himalaya, which have been imported from America since its discovery. In such cases — and endless others could be given — no one supposes that the fertility of the animals or plants has been suddenly and temporarily increased in any sensible degree. The obvious explanation is that the conditions of life have been highly favorable, and that there has consequently been less destruction of the old and young, and that nearly all the young have been enabled to breed. Their geometrical ratio of increase, the result of which never fails to be surprising, simply explains their extraordinarily rapid increase and wide diffusion in their new homes.

In a state of nature almost every full-grown plant annually produces seed, and amongst animals there are very few which do not annually pair. Hence we may confidently assert that all plants and animals are tending to increase at a geometrical ratio,— that all would rapidly stock every station in which they could anyhow exist,— and that this geometrical tendency to increase must be checked by destruction at some period of life. Our familiarity with the larger domestic animals tends, I think, to mislead us: we see no great destruction falling on them, but we do not keep in mind that thousands are annually slaughtered for food, and that in a state of nature an equal number would have somehow to be disposed of.

The only difference between organisms which annually produce eggs or seeds by the thousand, and those which produce extremely few, is that the slow breeders would require a few more years to people, under favorable conditions, a whole district, let it be ever so large. The condor lays a couple of eggs and the ostrich a score, and yet in the same country the condor may be the more numerous of the two; the Fulmar petrel lays but one egg, yet it is believed to be the most numerous bird in the world. One fly deposits hundreds of eggs, and another, like the hippobosca, a single one; but this difference does not determine how many individuals of the two species can be supported in a district. A large number of eggs is of some importance to those species which depend on a fluctuating amount of food, for it allows them rapidly to increase in number. But the real importance of a large number of eggs or seeds is to make up for much destruction at some period of life; and this period in the great majority of cases is an early one. If an animal can in any way protect its own eggs or young, a small number may be produced, and yet the average stock be fully kept up; but if many eggs or young are destroyed, many must be produced, or the species will become extinct. It would suffice to keep up the full number of a tree which lived on an average for a thousand years, if a single seed were produced once in a thousand years, supposing that this seed were never destroyed, and could be insured to germinate in a fitting place. So that, in all cases, the average number of any animal or plant depends only indirectly on the number of its eggs or seeds.

In looking at nature, it is most necessary to keep the foregoing considerations always in mind — never to forget that every single organic being may be said to be striving to the utmost to increase in numbers; that each lives by a struggle at some period of its life; that heavy destruction inevitably falls either on the young or old, during each generation or at recurrent intervals. Lighten any check, mitigate the destruction ever so little, and the number of the species will almost instantaneously increase to any amount.

OF THE NATURE OF THE CHECKS TO INCREASE

From ‹The Origin of Species›

THE causes which check the natural tendency of each species to increase are most obscure. Look at the most vigorous species: by as much as it swarms in numbers, by so much will it tend to increase still further. We know not exactly what the checks are, even in a single instance. Nor will this surprise any one who reflects how ignorant we are on this head, even in regard to mankind, although so incomparably better known than any other animal. This subject of the checks to increase has been ably treated by several authors, and I hope in a future work to discuss it at considerable length, more especially in regard to the feral animals of South America. Here I will make only a few remarks, just to recall to the reader's mind some of the chief points. Eggs or very young animals seem generally to suffer most, but this is not invariably the case. With plants there is a vast destruction of seeds; but from some observations which I have made, it appears that the seedlings suffer most, from germinating in ground already thickly stocked with other plants. Seedlings also are destroyed in vast numbers by various enemies: for instance, on a piece of ground three feet long and two wide, dug and cleared, and where there could be no choking from other plants, I marked all the seedlings of our native weeds as they came up, and out of 357 no less than 295 were destroyed, chiefly by slugs and insects. If turf which has long been mown—and the case would be the same with turf closely browsed by quadrupeds—be let to grow, the more vigorous plants gradually kill the less vigorous though fully grown plants; thus out of twenty species growing on a little plot of mown turf (three feet by four) nine species perished, from the other species being allowed to grow up freely.

The amount of food for each species of course gives the extreme limit to which each can increase; but very frequently it is not the obtaining food, but the serving as prey to other animals, which determines the average numbers of a species. Thus there seems to be little doubt that the stock of partridges, grouse, and hares in any large estate depends chiefly on the destruction of vermin. If not one head of game were shot during the next twenty years in England, and at the same time if no vermin were destroyed, there would in all probability be less game than at present, although hundreds of thousands of game animals are now annually shot. On the other hand, in some cases, as with the elephant, none are destroyed by beasts of prey; for even the tiger in India most rarely dares to attack a young elephant protected by its dam.

Climate plays an important part in determining the average numbers of a species, and periodical seasons of extreme cold or drought seem to be the most effective of all checks. I estimated (chiefly from the greatly reduced numbers of nests in the spring) that the winter of 1854–5 destroyed four-fifths of the birds in my own grounds; and this is a tremendous destruction, when we remember that ten per cent. is an extraordinarily severe mortality from epidemics with man. The action of climate seems at first sight to be quite independent of the struggle for existence; but in so far as climate chiefly acts in reducing food, it brings on the most severe struggle between the individuals, whether of the same or of distinct species, which subsist on the same kind of food. Even when climate,—for instance, extreme cold,—acts directly, it will be the least vigorous individuals, or those which have got least food through the advancing winter, which will suffer most.

When we travel from south to north, or from a damp region to a dry, we invariably see some species gradually getting rarer and rarer, and finally disappearing; and the change of climate being conspicuous, we are tempted to attribute the whole effect to its direct action. But this is a false view; we forget that each species, even where it most abounds, is constantly suffering enormous destruction at some period of its life, from enemies or from competitors for the same place and food; and if these enemies or competitors be in the least degree favored by any slight change of climate, they will increase in numbers; and as each area is already fully stocked with inhabitants, the other species must decrease. When we travel southward and see a species decreasing in numbers, we may feel sure that the cause lies quite as much in other species being favored as in this one being hurt. So it is when we travel northward; but in a somewhat lesser degree, for the number of species of all kinds, and therefore of competitors, decreases northward; hence in going northward, or in ascending a mountain, we far oftener meet with stunted forms, due to the *directly* injurious action of climate, than we do in proceeding southward or in descending a mountain. When we reach the arctic regions, or snow-capped summits, or absolute deserts, the struggle for life is almost exclusively with the elements.

That climate acts in main part indirectly by favoring other species, we clearly see in the prodigious number of plants which in our gardens can perfectly well endure our climate, but which never become naturalized, for they cannot compete with our native plants nor resist destruction by our native animals.

When a species, owing to highly favorable circumstances, increases inordinately in numbers in a small tract, epidemics—at least, this seems generally to occur with our game animals—often ensue; and here we have a limiting check independent of the struggle for life. But even some of these so-called epidemics appear to be due to parasitic worms, which have from some cause, possibly in part through facility of diffusion amongst the crowded animals, been disproportionally favored: and here comes in a sort of struggle between the parasite and its prey.

On the other hand, in many cases, a large stock of individuals of the same species, relatively to the numbers of its enemies, is absolutely necessary for its preservation. Thus we can easily raise plenty of corn and rape-seed, etc., in our fields, because the seeds are in great excess compared with the number of birds which feed on them; nor can the birds, though having a superabundance of food at this one season, increase in number proportionally to the supply of seed, as their numbers are checked during winter; but any one who has tried, knows how troublesome it is to get seed from a few wheat or other such plants in a garden: I have in this case lost every single seed. This view of the necessity of a large stock of the same species for its preservation, explains I believe some singular facts in nature, such as that of very rare plants being sometimes extremely abundant in the few spots where they do exist; and that of some social plants being social, that is, abounding in individuals, even on the extreme verge of their range. For in such cases, we may believe that a plant could exist only where the conditions of its life were so favorable that many could exist together and thus save the species from utter destruction. I should add that the good effects of inter-crossing, and the ill effects of close inter-breeding, no doubt come into play in many of these cases; but I will not here enlarge on this subject.

THE COMPLEX RELATIONS OF ALL ANIMALS AND PLANTS TO EACH OTHER IN THE STRUGGLE FOR EXISTENCE

From the ‹Origin of Species›

Many cases are on record, showing how complex and unexpected are the checks and relations between organic beings which have to struggle together in the same country. I will give only a single instance, which though a simple one interested me. In Staffordshire, on the estate of a relation where I had ample means of investigation, there was a large and extremely barren heath which had never been touched by the hand of man; but several hundred acres of exactly the same nature had been inclosed twenty-five years previously and planted with Scotch fir. The change in the native vegetation of the planted part of the heath was most remarkable, more than is generally seen in passing from one quite different soil to another: not only the proportional numbers of the heath-plants were wholly changed, but twelve species of plants (not counting grasses and carices) flourished in the plantations, which could not be found on the heath. The effect on the insects must have been still greater, for six insectivorous birds were very common in the plantations which were not to be seen on the heath; and the heath was frequented by two or three distinct insectivorous birds. Here we see how potent has been the effect of the introduction of a single tree, nothing whatever else having been done, with the exception of the land having been inclosed so that cattle could not enter.

But how important an element inclosure is, I plainly saw near Farnham in Surrey. Here there are extensive heaths with a few clumps of old Scotch firs on the distant hill-tops: within the last ten years large spaces have been inclosed, and self-sown firs are now springing up in multitudes, so close together that all cannot live. When I ascertained that these young trees had not been sown or planted, I was so much surprised at their numbers that I went to several points of view, whence I could examine hundreds of acres of the uninclosed heath, and literally I could not see a single Scotch fir except the old planted clumps. But on looking closely between the stems of the heath, I found a multitude of seedlings and little trees which had been perpetually browsed down by the cattle. In one square yard, at a point some hundred yards distant from one of the old clumps, I counted thirty-two little trees; and one of them, with twenty-six rings of growth, had during many years tried to raise its head above the stems of the heath, and had failed. No wonder that as soon as the land was inclosed it became thickly clothed with vigorously growing young firs. Yet the heath was so extremely barren and so extensive that no one would ever have imagined that cattle would have so closely and effectually searched it for food.

Here we see that cattle absolutely determine the existence of the Scotch fir; but in several parts of the world insects determine the existence of cattle. Perhaps Paraguay offers the most curious instance of this; for here neither cattle nor horses nor dogs have ever run wild, though they swarm southward and northward in a feral state; and Azara and Rengger have shown that this is caused by the greater number in Paraguay of a certain fly, which lays its eggs in the navels of these animals when first born. The increase of these flies, numerous as they are, must be habitually checked by some means, probably by other parasitic insects. Hence if certain insectivorous birds were to decrease in Paraguay, the parasitic insects would probably increase; and this would lessen the number of the navel-frequenting flies; then cattle and horses would become feral, and this would certainly greatly alter (as indeed I have observed in parts of South America) the vegetation; this again would largely affect the insects; and this, as we have just seen in Staffordshire, the insectivorous birds,—and so onwards in ever increasing circles of complexity. Not that under nature the relations will ever be as simple as this. Battle within battle must be continually recurring with varying success; and yet in the long run the forces are so nicely balanced that the face of nature remains for long periods of time uniform, though assuredly the merest trifle would give the victory to one organic being over another. Nevertheless, so profound is our ignorance and so high our presumption, that we marvel when we hear of the extinction of an organic being; and as we do not see the cause, we invoke cataclysms to desolate the world, or invent laws on the duration of the forms of life!

OF NATURAL SELECTION; OR THE SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

From the ‹Origin of Species›

Several writers have misapprehended or objected to the term Natural Selection. Some have even imagined that Natural Selection induces variability, whereas it implies only the preservation of such variations as arise and are beneficial to the being under its conditions of life. No one objects to agriculturists speaking of the potent effects of man's selection; and in this case the individual differences given by nature, which man for some object selects, must of necessity first occur. Others have objected that the term selection implies conscious choice in the animals which become modified; and it has even been urged that as plants have no volition, Natural Selection is not applicable to them! In the literal sense of the word, no doubt, Natural Selection is a false term; but who ever objected to chemists speaking of the elective affinities of the various elements?—and yet an acid cannot strictly be said to elect the base with which it in preference combines. It has been said that I speak of Natural Selection as an active power or Deity; but who objects to an author speaking of the attraction of gravity as ruling the movements of the planets? Every one knows what is meant and is implied by such metaphorical expressions; and they are almost necessary for brevity. So again it is difficult to avoid personifying the word Nature; but I mean by nature only the aggregate action and product of many natural laws, and by laws the sequence of events as ascertained by us. With a little familiarity such superficial objections will be forgotten.

We shall best understand the probable course of Natural Selection by taking the case of a country undergoing some slight physical change; for instance, of climate. The proportional numbers of its inhabitants will almost immediately undergo a change, and some species will probably become extinct. We may conclude, from what we have seen of the intimate and complex manner in which the inhabitants of each country are bound together, that any change in the numerical proportions of the inhabitants, independently of the change of climate itself, would seriously affect the others. If the country were open on its borders, new forms would certainly immigrate, and this would likewise seriously disturb the relations of some of the former inhabitants. Let it be remembered how powerful the influence of a single introduced tree or mammal has been shown to be. But in the case of an island, or of a country partly surrounded by barriers, into which new and better adapted forms could not freely enter, we should then have places in the economy of nature which would assuredly be better filled up if some of the original inhabitants were in some manner modified; for had the area been open to immigration, these same places would have been seized on by intruders. In such cases, slight modifications which in any way favored the individuals of any species by better adapting them to their altered conditions, would tend to be preserved; and Natural Selection would have free scope for the work of improvement.

We have good reason to believe, as shown in the first chapter, that changes in the conditions of life give a tendency to increased variability; and in the foregoing cases the conditions have changed, and this would manifestly be favorable to Natural Selection by affording a better chance of the occurrence of profitable variations. Unless such occur, Natural Selection can do nothing. Under the term of «variations,» it must never be forgotten that mere individual differences are included. As man can produce a great result with his domestic animals and plants by adding up in any given direction individual differences, so could Natural Selection, but far more easily from having incomparably longer time for action. Nor do I believe that any great physical change, as of climate, or any unusual degree of isolation to check immigration, is necessary in order that new and unoccupied places should be left, for Natural Selection to fill up by improving some of the varying inhabitants. For as all the inhabitants of each country are struggling together with nicely balanced forces, extremely slight modifications in the structure or habits of one species would often give it an advantage over others; and still further modifications of the same kind would often still further increase the advantage, as long as the species continued under the same conditions of life and profited by similar means of subsistence and defense. No country can be named, in which all the native inhabitants are now so perfectly adapted to each other and to the physical conditions under which they live, that none of them could be still better adapted or improved; for in all countries the natives have been so far conquered by naturalized productions that they have allowed some foreigners to take firm possession of the land. And as foreigners have thus in every country beaten some of the natives, we may safely conclude that the natives might have been modified with advantage, so as to have better resisted the intruders.

As man can produce, and certainly has produced, a great result by his methodical and unconscious means of selection, what may not Natural Selection effect? Man can act only on external and visible characters; Nature, if I may be allowed to personify the natural preservation or survival of the fittest, cares nothing for appearances, except in so far as they are useful to any being. She can act on every internal organ, on every shade of constitutional difference, on the whole machinery of life. Man selects only for his own good; Nature only for that of the being which she tends. Every selected character is fully exercised by her, as is implied by the fact of their selection. Man keeps the natives of many climates in the same country: he seldom exercises each selected character in some peculiar and fitting manner; he feeds a long and a short-beaked pigeon on the same food; he does not exercise a long-backed or long-legged quadruped in any peculiar manner; he exposes sheep with long and short wool to the same climate. He does not allow the most vigorous males to struggle for the females. He does not rigidly destroy all inferior animals, but protects during each varying season, as far as lies in his power, all his productions. He often begins his selection by some half-monstrous form; or at least by some modification prominent enough to catch the eye or to be plainly useful to him. Under Nature, the slightest differences of structure or constitution may well turn the nicely balanced scale in the struggle for life, and so be preserved. How fleeting are the wishes and efforts of man! How short his time, and consequently how poor will be his results, compared with those accumulated by Nature during whole geological periods! Can we wonder then that Nature's productions should be far «truer» in character than man's productions; that they should be infinitely better adapted to the most complex conditions of life, and should plainly bear the stamp of far higher workmanship?

It may metaphorically be said that Natural Selection is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world, the slightest variations; rejecting those that are bad, preserving and adding up all that are good; silently and insensibly working, *whenever and wherever opportunity offers*, at the improvement of each organic being in relation to its organic and inorganic conditions of life. We see nothing of these slow changes in progress until the hand of time has marked the lapse of ages, and then so imperfect is our view into long-past geological ages, that we see only that the forms of life are now different from what they formerly were.

In order that any great amount of modification should be effected in a species, a variety when once formed must again, perhaps after a long interval of time, vary or present individual differences of the same favorable nature as before; and these must be again preserved, and so onward step by step. Seeing that individual differences of the same kind perpetually recur, this can hardly be considered as an unwarrantable assumption. But whether it is true, we can judge only by seeing how far the hypothesis accords with and explains the general phenomena of nature. On the other hand, the ordinary belief that the amount of possible variation is a strictly limited quantity, is likewise a simple assumption.

Although Natural Selection can act only through and for the good of each being, yet characters and structures, which we are apt to consider as of very trifling importance, may thus be acted on. When we see leaf-eating insects green, and bark-feeders mottled gray; the Alpine ptarmigan white in winter, the red grouse the color of heather,—we must believe that these tints are of service to these birds and insects in preserving them from danger. Grouse, if not destroyed at some period of their lives, would increase in countless numbers; they are known to suffer largely from birds of prey; and hawks are guided by eyesight to their prey—so much so, that on parts of the Continent persons are warned not to keep white pigeons, as being the most liable to destruction. Hence Natural Selection might be effective in giving the proper color to each kind of grouse, and in keeping that color, when once acquired, true and constant. Nor ought we to think that the occasional destruction of an animal of any particular color would produce little effect: we should remember how essential it is in a flock of white sheep to destroy a lamb with the faintest trace of black. We have seen how the color of hogs which feed on the "paint-root" in Virginia, determines whether they shall live or die. In plants, the down on the fruit and the color of the flesh are considered by botanists as characters of the most trifling importance; yet we hear from an excellent horticulturist, Downing, that in the United States smooth-skinned fruits suffer far more from a beetle, a curculio, than those with down; that purple plums suffer far more from a certain disease than yellow plums; whereas another disease attacks yellow-fleshed peaches far more than those with other colored flesh. If with all the aids of art, these slight differences make a great difference in cultivating the several varieties, assuredly, in a state of nature, where the trees would have to struggle with other trees and with a host of enemies, such differences would effectually settle which variety, whether a smooth or downy, a yellow or a purple-fleshed fruit, should succeed.

In looking at many small points of difference between species, which, as far as our ignorance permits us to judge, seem quite unimportant, we must not forget that climate, food, etc., have no doubt produced some direct effect. It is also necessary to bear in mind that owing to the law of correlation, when one part varies, and the variations are accumulated through Natural Selection, other modifications, often of the most unexpected nature, will ensue.

As we see that those variations which under domestication appear at any particular period of life, tend to reappear in the offspring at the same period;—for instance, in the shape, size, and flavor of the seeds of the many varieties of our culinary and agricultural plants; in the caterpillar and cocoon stages of the varieties of the silkworm; in the eggs of poultry, and in the color of the down of their chickens; in the horns of our sheep and cattle when nearly adult; so in a state of nature Natural Selection will be enabled to act on and modify organic beings at any age, by the accumulation of variations profitable at that age, and by their inheritance at a corresponding age. If it profit a plant to have its seeds more and more widely disseminated by the wind, I can see no greater difficulty in this being effected through Natural Selection, than in the cotton-planter increasing and improving by selection the down in the pods on his cotton-trees. Natural Selection may modify and adapt the larva of an insect to a score of contingencies wholly different from those which concern the mature insect; and these modifications may effect, through correlation, the structure of the adult. So, conversely, modifications in the adult may affect the structure of the larva; but in all cases Natural Selection will insure that they shall not be injurious: for if they were so, the species would become extinct.

Natural Selection will modify the structure of the young in relation to the parent, and of the parent in relation to the young. In social animals it will adapt the structure of each individual for the benefit of the whole community, if the community profits by the selected change. What Natural Selection cannot do, is to modify the structure of one species, without giving it any advantage, for the good of another species; and though statements to this effect may be found in works of natural history, I cannot find one case which will bear investigation. A structure used only once in an animal's life, if of high importance to it, might be modified to any extent by Natural Selection; for instance, the great jaws possessed by certain insects, used exclusively for opening the cocoon, or the hard tip to the beak of unhatched birds, used for breaking the eggs. It has been asserted that of the best short-beaked tumbler-pigeons a greater number perish in the egg than are able to get out of it; so that fanciers assist in the act of hatching. Now if Nature had to make the beak of a full-grown pigeon very short for the bird's own advantage, the process of modification would be very slow, and there would be simultaneously the most rigorous selection of all the young birds within the egg, which had the most powerful and hardest beaks, for all with weak beaks would inevitably perish; or more delicate and more easily broken shells might be selected, the thickness of the shell being known to vary like every other structure.

It may be well here to remark that with all beings there must be much fortuitous destruction, which can have little or no influence on the course of Natural Selection. For instance, a vast number of eggs or seeds are annually devoured, and these could be modified through Natural Selection only if they varied in some manner which protected them from their enemies. Yet many of these eggs or seeds would perhaps, if not destroyed, have yielded individuals better adapted to their conditions of life than any of those which happened to survive. So again a vast number of mature animals and plants, whether or not they be the best adapted to their conditions, must be annually destroyed by accidental causes, which would not be in the least degree mitigated by certain changes of structure or constitution which would in other ways be beneficial to the species. But let the destruction of the adults be ever so heavy, if the number which can exist in any district be not wholly kept down by such causes, — or again, let the destruction of eggs or seeds be so great that only a hundredth or a thousandth part are developed,— yet of those which do survive, the best adapted individuals, supposing that there is any variability in a favorable direction, will tend to propagate their kind in larger numbers than the less well adapted. If the numbers be wholly kept down by the causes just indicated, as will often have been the case, Natural Selection will be powerless in certain beneficial directions; but this is no valid objection to its efficiency at other times and in other ways; for we are far from having any reason to suppose that many species ever undergo modification and improvement at the same time in the same area.

PROGRESSIVE CHANGE COMPARED WITH INDEPENDENT CREATION

From the ‹Origin of Species›

Authors of the highest eminence seem to be fully satisfied with the view that each species has been independently created. To my mind it accords better with what we know of the laws impressed on matter by the Creator, that the production and extinction of the past and present inhabitants of the world should have been due to secondary causes, like those determining the birth and death of an individual. When I view all beings not as special creations, but as the lineal descendants of some few beings which lived long before the first bed of the Cambrian system was deposited, they seem to me to become ennobled. Judging from the past, we may safely infer that not one living species will transmit its unaltered likeness to a distant futurity. And of the species now living, very few will transmit progeny of any kind to a far distant futurity; for the manner in which all organic beings are grouped shows that the greater number of species in each genus, and all the species in many genera, have left no descendants, but have become utterly extinct. We can so far take a prophetic glance into futurity as to foretell that it will be the common and widely spread species, belonging to the larger and dominant groups within each class, which will ultimately prevail and procreate new and dominant species. As all the living forms of life are the lineal descendants of those which lived long before the Cambrian epoch, we may feel certain that the ordinary succession by generation has never once been broken, and that no cataclysm has desolated the whole world. Hence we may look with some confidence to a secure future of great length. And as Natural Selection works solely by and for the good of each being, all corporeal and mental endowments will tend to progress towards perfection.

It is interesting to contemplate a tangled bank, clothed with many plants of many kinds, with birds singing on the bushes, with various insects flitting about, and with worms crawling through the damp earth, and to reflect that these elaborately constructed forms, so different from each other, and dependent upon each other in so complex a manner, have all been produced by laws acting around us. These laws, taken in the largest sense, being Growth with Reproduction; Inheritance, which is almost implied by reproduction; Variability from the indirect and direct action of the conditions of life, and from use and disuse: a Ratio of Increase so high as to lead to a Struggle for Life, and as a consequence to Natural Selection, entailing Divergence of Character and the Extinction of less-improved forms. Thus from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving,—namely, the production of the higher animals,—directly follows. There is grandeur in this view of life, with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been and are being evolved.

CREATIVE DESIGN

From ‹The Variation of Animals and Plants under Domestication›

Some authors have declared that natural selection explains nothing, unless the precise cause of each slight individual difference be made clear. If it were explained to a savage utterly ignorant of the art of building, how the edifice had been raised stone upon stone, and why wedge-formed fragments were used for the arches, flat stones for the roof, etc.; and if the use of each part and of the whole building were pointed out, it would be unreasonable if he declared that nothing had been made clear to him, because the precise cause of the shape of each fragment could not be told. But this is a nearly parallel case with the objection that selection explains nothing, because we know not the cause of each individual difference in the structure of each being.

The shape of the fragments of stone at the base of our precipice may be called accidental, but this is not strictly correct; for the shape of each depends on a long sequence of events, all obeying natural laws: on the nature of the rock, on the lines of deposition or cleavage, on the form of the mountain, which depends on its upheaval and subsequent denudation, and lastly on the storm or earthquake which throws down the fragments. But in regard to the use to which the fragments may be put, their shape may be strictly said to be accidental. And here we are led to face a great difficulty, in alluding to which I am aware that I am traveling beyond my proper province. An omniscient Creator must have foreseen every consequence which results from the laws imposed by him. But can it be reasonably maintained that the Creator intentionally ordered, if we use the words in any ordinary sense, that certain fragments of rock should assume certain shapes so that the builder might erect his edifice? If the various laws which have determined the shape of each fragment were not predetermined for the builder's sake, can it be maintained with any greater probability that he specially ordained for the sake of the breeder each of the innumerable variations in our domestic animals and plants;—many of these variations being of no service to man, and not beneficial, far more often injurious, to the creatures themselves? Did he ordain that the crop and tail-feathers of the pigeon should vary, in order that the fancier might make his grotesque pouter and fantail breeds? Did he cause the frame and mental qualities of the dog to vary in order that a breed might be formed of indomitable ferocity, with jaws fitted to pin down the bull for man's brutal sport? But if we give up the principle in one case,—if we do not admit that the variations of the primeval dog were intentionally guided in order that the greyhound, for instance, that perfect image of symmetry and vigor, might be formed,—no shadow of reason can be assigned for the belief that variations, alike in nature and the result of the same general laws, which have been the groundwork through natural selection of the formation of the most perfectly adapted animals in the world, man included, were intentionally and specially guided. However much we may wish it, we can hardly follow Professor Asa Gray in his belief that "variation has been led along certain beneficial lines," like a stream "along definite and useful lines of irrigation." If we assume that each particular variation was from the beginning of all time preordained, then that plasticity of organization which leads to many injurious deviations of structure, as well as the redundant power of reproduction which inevitably leads to a struggle for existence, and as a consequence, to the natural selection or survival of the fittest,—must appear to us superfluous laws of Nature. On the other hand, an omnipotent and omniscient Creator ordains everything and foresees everything. Thus we are brought face to face with a difficulty as insoluble as is that of free-will and predestination.

THE ORIGIN OF THE HUMAN SPECIES

From ‹The Descent of Man›

The main conclusion arrived at in this work — namely, that man is descended from some lowly organized form — will, I regret to think, be highly distasteful to many persons. But there can hardly be a doubt that we are descended from barbarians. The astonishment which I felt on first seeing a party of Fuegians on a wild and broken shore will never be forgotten by me, for the reflection at once rushed into my mind — Such were our ancestors. These men were absolutely naked and bedaubed with paint. . . . They possessed hardly any arts, and like wild animals, lived on what they could catch; they had no government, and were merciless to every one not of their own small tribe. He who has seen a savage in his native land will not feel much shame if forced to acknowledge that the blood of some more humble creature flows in his veins. For my own part, I would as soon be descended from that heroic little monkey who braved his dreaded enemy in order to save the life of his keeper; or from that old baboon who, descending from the mountains, carried away in triumph his young comrade from a crowd of astonished dogs, — as from a savage who delights to torture his enemies, offers up bloody sacrifices, practices infanticide without remorse, treats his wives like slaves, knows no decency, and is haunted by the grossest superstitions.

Man may be excused for feeling some pride at having risen, though not through his own exertions, to the very summit of the organic scale; and the fact of his having thus risen, instead of having been aboriginally placed there, may give him hopes for a still higher destiny in the distant future. But we are not here concerned with hopes or fears, only with the truth as far as our reason allows us to discover it. I have given the evidence to the best of my ability; and we must acknowledge, as it seems to me, that Man with all his noble qualities, with sympathy which feels for the most debased, with benevolence which extends not only to other men but to the humblest living creature, with his godlike intellect which has penetrated into the movements and constitution of the solar system, — with all these exalted powers, Man still bears in his bodily frame the indelible stamp of his lowly origin.

ALPHONSE DAUDET.

ALPHONSE DAUDET

(1840–)

BY AUGUSTIN FILON

FORTY years have now elapsed since a lad of seventeen, shivering under his light summer dress in a cold misty morning, was waiting, with an empty stomach, for the opening of a «dairy» in the Quartier Latin. Young as he was, he looked still younger: a pale, eager, intellectual face, with flashing eyes, delicately carved features, and a virgin forest of dark hair falling low on his brow. He had been an usher for a twelvemonth at a small college in the South of France, and he had just arrived in Paris after a two-days' journey in a third-class railway carriage, during which time he had tasted no food and no drink except a few drops of brandy from the flask of some charitable sailors. And there he was, with two francs left in his pocket, and an unlimited supply of courage, cheerfulness, and ambition, fully determined to make the whole world familiar with the obscure name of Alphonse Daudet.

We all know how well he has succeeded in winning for himself a foremost place in the ranks of French contemporary literature, and indeed of literature in general. There is no doubt that he was admirably equipped for the great struggle on which he was about to enter; but it may be also remarked that he had not to fight it out alone and with his own solitary resources, but found at the very outset useful and strong auxiliaries. He was to have a powerful though somewhat selfish and indolent patron in the famous Duke of Morny, who admitted him among his secretaries before he was twenty years old. Then he had the good fortune to attract the attention and to take the fancy of Villemessant, the editor of the Figaro, who at first sight gave him a place in his nursery of young talents. He had a kind and devoted brother, who cheerfully shared with him the little money he had to live upon, and thus saved him from the unspeakable miseries which would inevitably attend a literary début at such an early age and under such inauspicious circumstances. Later on, he was still more fortunate in securing a loving and intelligent wife, who was to be to him, in the words of the holy Scriptures, «a companion of his rank,» a wife who was not only to become a help and a comfort, but a literary adviser, a moral guide, and a second conscience far more strict and exacting than his own; a wife who taught him how to direct and husband his precious faculties,—how to turn them to the noblest use and highest ends.

But before that was to come, the first thing was to find a publisher; and after long looking in vain for one throughout the whole city, he at last discovered the man he wanted, at his door, in the close vicinity of that Hôtel du Sinat, in the Rue de Tournon, where the two brothers Daudet had taken up their abode. That publisher was Jules Tardieu, himself an author of some merit (under the transparent pseudonym of J. T. de St. Germain): a mild, quiet humorist of the optimistic school, a Topffer on a small scale and with reduced proportions.

And thus it happened that a few months after the lad's arrival in Paris an elegant booklet, with the attractive title 'Les Amoureuses' (Women in Love) printed in red letters on its snow-white cover, made its appearance under the *galeries de l'Odéon*, where in the absence of political emotions, the youth of the Quartier was eagerly looking for literary novelties, and where Daudet himself had been wandering often, in the hope of an occasional acquaintance with the great critics and journalists of the day who made the *galeries* their favorite resort.

I have read that the book was a failure; that the young author was unable to pay the printer, and was accordingly served with stamped paper at the official residence of Morny, where he was then acting as secretary; that the duke, far from showing any displeasure at the occurrence, was delighted to find his secretary in hot water with the bailiffs, and that he arranged the matter in the most paternal spirit. This may be a pretty little story, but I fear it is a «legend.» I cannot reconcile it with the fact that four years after the first publication, the same publisher gave the public another edition of 'Les Amoureuses,' and that the young poet dedicated it to him as a token of respect and gratitude. The truth is that Daudet's little volume not only did not pass unnoticed, but received a good deal of attention, chiefly from the young men. Many thought that a new Musset was born in their midst, only a few months after the real one had been laid down to his last sleep in the Père Lachaise, under the trembling shadow of his favorite willow-tree. Young Daudet alluded to the unfortunate poet—

> « . . . mort de dégoût, de tristesse, et d'absinthe;»—

and he tried to imitate the half cynical, half nostalgic skepticism which had made the author of 'Les Nuits' so powerful over the minds of the new generation and so dear to their hearts.

But it did not seem perfectly genuine. When Daudet said, «My heart is old,» no one believed it, and he did not believe it himself, for he entitled the piece ‹Fanfaronnade›; and in fact it was nothing more than a fanfaronnade. The book was full of the freshness, buoyancy, and frolicsome petulance of youth. Here and there a few reminiscences might be traced to the earliest poets of the sixteenth century, more particularly to Clement Marot. A tinge of the expiring romanticism lingered in ‹Les Amoureuses› with a much more substantial admixture of the spirit of an age which made pleasure-hunting its paramount occupation. The precocious child could modulate the ‹Romance à Madame› as well as the page of Beaumarchais, if not better; but he could also laugh it down in Gavroche's sneering way; he could intersperse a song of love with the irony of the boulevard or the more genial humor of his native South. He was at his best in the tale of ‹Les Prunes›—

«Si vous voulez savoir comment
Nous nous aimâmes pour des prunes»—

That exquisite little piece survived long the youthful volume of ‹Les Amoureuses.› In those days, when Coquelin's monologues and *saynètes* were yet unknown, the brothers Lionnet, then in the height of their vogue, delighted the drawing-rooms with the miniature masterpiece.

Still, those who had prophesied the advent of a new poet were doomed to disappointment. Every one knows what Sainte-Beuve once said about the short-lived existence, in most of us, of a poet whom the real man is to survive. Shall we say that this was the case with Daudet, who never, as far as the world knows, wrote verses after twenty-five? No; the poet was not to die in him, but lived on and lives still to this day. Only he has always written in prose.

After his successful début, Daudet felt his way in different directions. In collaboration with M. Ernest Lepine, who has since made a reputation under the name of Quatrelles, he had a drama, ‹The Last Idol,› performed at the Odéon theatre,—at that same Odéon which in his first days of Paris seems to have been the centre of his life and of his ambitions. But he more frequently appeared before the public as a journalist and a humorist, a writer of light articles and short stories. Nothing can give a more true, more vivacious, and on the whole more favorable impression of the Daudet of the period than the ‹Lettres de Mon Moulin› (Letters from My Windmill). They owe their title to an old deserted windmill where Alphonse Daudet seems to have lived some time in complete seclusion, forgetting, or trying to forget, the excitement of Parisian life. The preface, most curiously disguised under the form of a mock contract which is supposed to transfer the ownership from the old proprietor to the poet, and professes to give the *état de lieux* or description of the place, is an amusing parody of legal jargon. The next chapter describes the installation of the new master in the same happy vein, with all the odd circumstances attending it.

Throughout the rest of the volume, Daudet disappears and reappears, as his fancy prompts him to do. Now he lets himself be carried back to past memories and distant places; now he gives us a mediæval tale or a domestic drama of to-day compressed into a few brief pages, or a picture of rural life, or a glimpse of that literary hell from which he had just escaped and to which he was soon to return. He changed his tone and his subject with amazing versatility, from the bitterest satire to idyllic sweetness, or to a pleasant kind of clever naïveté which is truly his own. We see him musing among the firs and the pine-trees of his native Provence, or riding on the top of the diligence under the scorching sun and listening, in a Sterne-like fashion, to the conversation which took place between the facetious baker and the unhappy knife-grinder, or chatting familiarly with Frederic Mistral, who takes him into the confidence of his poetical dreams. Then, again, we see him sitting down at the table of an Algerian sheik; or wandering on the gloomy rocks where the Semillante was lost, and trying to revive the awful tragedy of her last minutes; or shut up in a solitary light-house with the keepers for weeks and weeks together, content with the society and with the fare of those poor, rough, uncultivated men, cut off from the whole world, alone with the stormy winds and his stormy thoughts. Wherever his morbid restlessness takes him, whatever part he chooses to assume, whether he wants to move us to laughter or to tears, we can but follow him fascinated and spell-bound, and in harmony with his moods. Daudet when he wrote those letters was already a perfect master of all the resources of the language. What he had seen or felt, he could make us see and feel. He could make old words new with the freshness, ardor, and sincerity of the personal impressions which he was pouring into them unceasingly.

The ‘Letters from My Mill’ had been scattered here and there through different newspapers, and at different times. They were reprinted in the form of a book in 1868. The year before he had given to the public ‘Le Petit Chose’ (A Little Chap), which is better known, I believe, to the English-speaking races under the rather misleading title of ‘My Brother Jack.’ ‘Le Petit Chose’ was a commercial success, but it is doubtful whether it will rank as high among Daudet's productions as the ‘Lettres de Mon Moulin.’ He began to compose it in February 1866, during one of those misanthropic fits to which he was subject at periodical intervals, and which either paralyzed altogether, or quickened into fever, his creative faculties. He finished the work two years later in a very different mood, immediately after his marriage. As might have been expected, the two parts are very dissimilar, and it must be confessed greatly unequal. ‹Le Petit Chose› has reminded more than one reader of ‹David Copperfield›; and it cannot be denied that the two works bear some resemblance both as regards manner and matter. But though Dickens was then widely read and much admired in France, plagiarism is out of the question. If there is a little of Dickens about ‹Le Petit Chose,› there is a great deal more of Daudet himself in it. Young Eyssette, the hero of the novel, starts in life as Daudet had done and at the same period of life, in the quality of an usher at a small provincial college. Whether we take it as a fiction, with its innumerable bits of delicate humor, lovely descriptions of places and glimpses of characters in humble life, or whether we accept it as an autobiography which is likely to bring us into closer acquaintance with the inner soul of a great man, the first part is delightful reading. But we lose sight of him through all the adventures, at once wild and commonplace, which are crowding in the second part, to culminate into the most unconvincing dénouement. Even when speaking of himself, Daudet is sometimes at a disadvantage, perhaps because, as he justly observed, «it is too early at twenty-five to comment upon one's own past career.» Only the old man is able to look at his former self through the distance of years and to see it as it stood once, in its true light and with its real proportions.

‹Tartarin of Tarascon› saw the light for the first time in 1872. Strange to say, the readers of the Petit Moniteur, to whom it was first offered in a serial form, did not like it. In consequence of their marked disapproval, the publication had to be abandoned and was then resumed through the columns of another newspaper. This time the mistake was entirely on the side of the public. For — apart from the fact that the immortal Tartarin was not yet Tartarin, but answered to the much less typical name of Chapatin — the general outlines of the character were already visible in all their distinctness from the beginning, as all those who have read the introductory chapters will readily admit. And the same lines were to be followed with an undeviating fixity of artistic purpose and with unfailing verve and spirit to the last. ‹The Prodigious Adventures of Tartarin,› ‹Tartarin on the Alps,› and ‹Port-Tarascon,› form a trilogy; and I know of no other example in modern French literature of so long and so well sustained a joke. How is it then that we never grow tired of Tartarin? It is probably because beneath the surface of Daudet's playful absurdity there underlies a rich substratum of good common-sense and keen observation. Since ‹Don Quixote› was written, no caricature has ever been more human or more true than Tartarin.

Frenchmen are not, as is frequently asserted by their Anglo-Saxon critics, totally unfit to appreciate humor, when it is mingled with the study of man's nature and seasoned with that high-spiced irony of which they have been so fond at all times, from the days of Villon to those of Rochefort. Still, Daudet would never have acquired such a complete mastery over the general public in his own country, if he had not been able to gratify their taste for that graphic and faithful description of manners and characters, which in other centuries put the moralists into fashion. Realism never disappears altogether from French literature: it was at that moment all-powerful. Zola was coming to the front with the first volumes of the well-known 'Rougon-Macquart,' and Daudet in 1874 entered on the same path, though in a different spirit, with 'Fromont Jeune et Risler Aîné.' The success was immediate and immense. The French *bourgeoisie* accepted it at once as a true picture of its vices and its virtues. The novel might, it is true, savor a little of Parisian cockneyism. Fastidious critics might discover in it some mixture of weak sentimentalism, or a few traces of Dickensian affectation and cheap tricks in story-telling. Young men of the new social school might take exception to that old-fashioned democracy which had its apotheosis in Risler senior. Despite all those objections, it was pronounced a masterpiece of legitimate pathos and sound observation. Even the minor characters were judged striking, and Delobelle's name, for instance, occurs at once to our mind whenever we try to realize the image of the modern *cabotin*.

'Jack,' which came next, exceeded the usual length of French novels. «Too much paper, my son!» old Flaubert majestically observed with a smile when the author presented him with a copy of his book. As for George Sand, she felt so sick at heart and so depressed when she had finished reading 'Jack,' that she could work no more and had to remain idle for three or four days. A painful book, indeed, a distressing book, but how fascinating! And is not its wonderful influence over the readers exemplified in the most striking manner by the fact that it had the power to unnerve and to incapacitate for her daily task that most valiant of all intellectual laborers, that hardest of hard workers, George Sand?

The lost ground, if there had been any lost at all, was soon regained with 'Le Nabab' (The Nabob) and 'Les Rois en Exil' (Kings in Exile). They took the reader to a higher sphere of emotion and thought, showed us greater men fighting for greater things on a wider theatre than the middle-class life in which Fromont and Risler had moved. At the same time they kept the balance more evenly than 'Jack' had done between the two elements of human drama, good and evil, hope and despair, laughter and tears. But a higher triumph was to be achieved with 'Numa Roumestan,' which brought Daudet's literary fame to its zenith.

'Tartarin' had not exhausted all that the author had to say of meridional ways and manners. The Provençal character has its dramatic as well as its comic aspect. In 'Numa Roumestan' we have the farce and the tragedy blended together into a coherent whole. We have a Tartarin whose power over man and woman is not a mockery but a reality, who can win love and sympathy and admiration, not in little Tarascon, mind you, but in Paris; who sends joy abroad and creates torture at home; a charming companion, a kind master, a subtle politician, a wonderful talker, but a light-hearted and faithless husband, a genial liar, a smiling and good-natured deceiver; the true image of the gifted adventurer who periodically emerges from the South and goes northward finally to conquer and govern the whole country.

As Zola has remarked, the author of 'Numa Roumestan' poured himself out into that book with his double nature, North and South, the rich sensuous imagination, the indolent easy-going optimism of his native land, and the stern moral sensitiveness which was partly characteristic of his own mind, partly acquired by painful and protracted experience. To depict his hero he had only to consult the most intimate records of his own lifelong struggle. For he had been trying desperately to evince Roumestan out of his own being. He had fought and conquered, but only partially conquered. And on this partial failure we must congratulate him and congratulate ourselves. He said once that «Provençal landscape without sunshine is dull and uninteresting.» The same may be said of his literary genius. It wants sunshine, or else it loses half its loveliness and its irresistible charm. 'Roumestan' is full of sunshine, and there is no other among his books, except 'Tartarin,' where the bright and happy light of the South plays more freely and more gracefully.

The novel is equally strong if you examine it from a different standpoint. Nothing can be artistically better and more enchanting than the Farandole scene, or more amusing than Roumestan's intrigue with the young opera singer; nothing can be more grand than old Le Quesnoy's confession of sin and shame, or more affecting than the closing scene where Rosalie is taught forgiveness by her dying sister. Other parts in Daudet's work may sound hollow; 'Numa Roumestan' will stand the most critical scrutiny as a drama, as a work of art, as a faithful representation of life. Daudet's talents were then at their best and united in happy combination for that splendid effort which was not to be renewed.

In 'Sapho' Daudet described the modern courtesan, in 'L'Évangéliste' a desperate case of religious madness. In 'L'Immortel' he gave vent to his feelings against the French Academy, which had repulsed him once and to which he turned his back forever in disgust.

The angry writer pursued his enemy to death. In his unforgiving mood, he was not satisfied before he had drowned the Academy in the muddy waters of the Seine, with its unfortunate Secrétaire-perpetuel, Astier-Réhu. The general verdict was that the vengeance was altogether out of proportion to the offense; and that despite all its brilliancy of wit and elaborate incisiveness of style, the satire was really too violent and too personal to give real enjoyment to unbiased and unprejudiced readers.

At different periods of his career Daudet had tried his hand as a dramatist, but never succeeded in getting a firm foot on the French stage. Play-goers still remember the signal failure of ‹Lise Tavernier,› the indifferent reception of ‹L'Arlésienne,› or more recently, of ‹L'Obstacle.› All his successful novels have been dramatized, but their popularity in that new form fell far short of the common expectation. As an explanation of the fact various reasons may be suggested. Daudet, I am inclined to think, is endowed with real dramatic powers, not with scenic qualities; and from their conventional point of view, old stagers will pronounce the construction of his novels too weak for plays to be built upon them. Again, in the play-house we miss the man who tells the story, the happy presence — so unlike Flaubert's cheerless impassibility — the generous anger, the hearty laugh, the delightful humor, that strange something which seems to appeal to every one of us in particular when we read his novels. Dickens was once heard to say, on a public occasion, that he owed his prodigious world-wide popularity to this: that he was «so very human.» The words will apply with equal felicity to Daudet's success. He never troubles to conceal from his readers that he is a man. When the critic of the future has to assign him a place and to compare his productions with the writings of his great contemporary and fellow-worker Émile Zola, it will occur to him that Daudet never had the steady-going indomitable energy, the ox-like patience, the large and comprehensive intellect which are so characteristic in the master of Médan; that he recoiled from assuming, like the author of ‹Germinal› and ‹Lourdes,› a bold and definite position in the social and religious strife of our days; that he never dreamt for a moment of taking the survey of a whole society and covering the entire ground on which it stands with his books.

Such a task — the critic will say — would have been uncongenial to him. The scientist is careful to explain everything and to omit nothing; he aims at completeness. But Daudet is an artist, not a scientist. He is a poet in the primitive sense of the word, or, as he styled himself in one of his books, a «trouvère.» He has creative power, but he has at the same time his share of the minor gift of observation. He had to write for a public of strongly realistic tendencies, who understood and desired nothing better than the faithful, accurate, almost scientific description of life. Daudet could supply the demand, but as he was not born a realist, whatever social influences he had been subjected to, he remained free from the faults and excesses of the school. He borrowed from it all that was good and sound; he accepted realism as a practical method, not as an ultimate result and a consummation. Again, he was preserved from the danger of going down too deep and too low into the unclean mysteries of modern humanity, not so much perhaps by moral delicacy as by an artistic distaste for all that is repulsive and unseemly. For those reasons, it would not be surprising if — when Death has made him young again — Alphonse Daudet was destined to outlive and outshine many who have enjoyed an equal or even greater celebrity during this century. He will command an ever increasing circle of admirers and friends, and generations yet unborn will grow warm in his sunshine.

Augustin Filon

THE TWO TARTARINS

From ‹Tartarin of Tarascon›

Answer me, you will say, how the mischief is it that Tartarin of Tarascon never left Tarascon, with all this mania for adventure, need of powerful sensations, and folly about travel, rides, and journeys from the Pole to the Equator?

For that is a fact: up to the age of five-and-forty, the dreadless Tarasconian had never once slept outside his own room. He had not even taken that obligatory trip to Marseilles which every sound Provençal makes upon coming of age. The most of his knowledge included Beaucaire, and yet that's not far from Tarascon, there being merely the bridge to go over. Unfortunately, this rascally bridge has so often been blown away by the gales, it is so long and frail, and the Rhône has such a width at this spot that — well, faith! you understand! Tartarin of Tarascon preferred *terra firma.*

We are afraid we must make a clean breast of it: in our hero there were two very distinct characters. Some Father of the

Church has said: «I feel there are two men in me.» He would have spoken truly in saying this about Tartarin, who carried in his frame the soul of Don Quixote, the same chivalric impulses, heroic ideal, and crankiness for the grandiose and romantic; but, worse is the luck! he had not the body of the celebrated hidalgo, that thin and meagre apology for a body, on which material life failed to take a hold; one that could get through twenty nights without its breast-plate being unbuckled, and forty-eight hours on a handful of rice. On the contrary, Tartarin's body was a stout honest bully of a body, very fat, very weighty, most sensual and fond of coddling, highly touchy, full of low-class appetite and homely requirements — the short, paunchy body on stumps of the immortal Sancho Panza.

Don Quixote and Sancho Panza in the one same man! you will readily comprehend what a cat-and-dog couple they made! what strife! what clapperclawing! Oh, the fine dialogue for Lucian or Saint-Évremond to write, between the two Tartarins — Quixote-Tartarin and Sancho-Tartarin! Quixote-Tartarin firing up on the stories of Gustave Aimard, and shouting, «Up and at 'em!» and Sancho-Tartarin thinking only of the rheumatics ahead, and murmuring, «I mean to stay at home.»

The Duet

QUIXOTE-TARTARIN	SANCHO-TARTARIN
[*Highly excited*]	[*Quite calmly*]
Cover yourself with glory, Tartarin.	Tartarin, cover yourself with flannel.
[*Still more excitedly*]	[*Still more calmly*]
Oh for the terrible double-barreled rifle! Oh for bowie-knives, lassos, and moccasins!	Oh for the thick knitted waistcoats! and warm knee-caps! Oh for the welcome padded caps with ear-flaps!
[*Above all self-control*]	[*Ringing up the maid*]
A battle-axe! fetch me a battle-axe!	Now then, Jeannette, do bring up that chocolate!

Whereupon Jeannette would appear with an unusually good cup of chocolate, just right in warmth, sweetly smelling, and with the play of light on watered silk upon its unctuous surface, and with succulent grilled steak flavored with anise-seed, which would set Sancho-Tartarin off on the broad grin, and into a laugh that drowned the shouts of Quixote-Tartarin.

Thus it came about that Tartarin of Tarascon never had left Tarascon.

OF «MENTAL MIRAGE,» AS DISTINGUISHED FROM LYING

From ‘Tartarin of Tarascon’

Under one conjunction of circumstances, Tartarin did however once almost start out upon a great voyage.

The three brothers Garcio-Camus, natives of Tarascon, established in business at Shanghai, offered him the managership of one of their branches there. This undoubtedly presented the kind of life he hankered after. Plenty of active business, a whole army of understrappers to order about, and connections with Russia, Persia, Turkey in Asia — in short, to be a merchant prince.

In Tartarin's mouth, the title of Merchant Prince thundered out as something stunning!

The house of Garcio-Camus had the further advantage of sometimes being favored with a call from the Tartars. Then the doors would be slammed shut, all the clerks flew to arms, up ran the consular flag, and zizz! phit! bang! out of the windows upon the Tartars.

I need not tell you with what enthusiasm Quixote-Tartarin clutched this proposition; sad to say, Sancho-Tartarin did not see it in the same light, and as he was the stronger party, it never came to anything. But in the town there was much talk about it. Would he go or would he not? «I'll lay he will» — and «I'll wager he won't!» It was the event of the week. In the upshot, Tartarin did not depart, but the matter redounded to his credit none the less. Going or not going to Shanghai was all one to Tarascon. Tartarin's journey was so much talked about that people got to believe he had done it and returned, and at the club in the evening members would actually ask for information on life at Shanghai, the manners and customs and climate, about opium, and commerce.

Deeply read up, Tartarin would graciously furnish the particulars desired, and in the end the good fellow was not quite sure himself about not having gone to Shanghai; so that after relating for the hundredth time how the Tartars came down on the trading post, it would most naturally happen him to add: —

« Then I made my men take up arms and hoist the consular flag, and zizz! phit! bang! out of the windows upon the Tartars. »

On hearing this, the whole club would quiver.

« But according to that, this Tartarin of yours is an awful liar. »

« No, no, a thousand times over, no! Tartarin is no liar. »

« But the man ought to know that he has never been to Shanghai — »

« Why, of course, he knows that; but still — »

« But still, » you see — mark that! It is high time for the law to be laid down once for all on the reputation as drawers of the long bow which Northerners fling at Southerners. There are no Baron Munchausens in the South of France, neither at Nîmes nor Marseilles, Toulouse nor Tarascon. The Southerner does not deceive, but is self-deceived. He does not always tell the cold-drawn truth, but he believes he does. His falsehood is not falsehood, but a kind of mental mirage.

Yes, purely mirage! The better to follow me, you should actually follow me into the South, and you will see I am right. You have only to look at that Lucifer's own country, where the sun transmogrifies everything, and magnifies it beyond life-size. The little hills of Provence are no bigger than the Butte Montmartre, but they will loom up like the Rocky Mountains; the Square House at Nîmes — a mere model to put on your sideboard — will seem grander than St. Peter's. You will see — in brief, the only exaggerator in the South is Old Sol, for he does enlarge everything he touches. What was Sparta in its days of splendor? a pitiful hamlet. What was Athens? at the most, a second-class town; and yet in history both appear to us as enormous cities. This is a sample of what the sun can do.

Are you going to be astonished, after this, that the same sun falling upon Tarascon should have made of an ex-captain in the Army Clothing Factory, like Bravida, the « brave commandant »; of a sprout, an Indian fig-tree; and of a man who had missed going to Shanghai one who had been there?

THE DEATH OF THE DAUPHIN

From ‹Letters from My Windmill›

The little Dauphin is ill; the little Dauphin will die. In all the churches of the kingdom the Holy Sacrament is laid ready day and night, and tapers are burning, for the recovery of the royal child. The streets of the old town are sad and silent; the bells ring no more; the carriages are driven very slowly. The curious townspeople are gathered just outside the palace, and are staring in through the grating of the gates at the guards, with their golden helmets, who walk the court with an important air. The entire castle is in a state of anxiety; the chamberlains and major-domos go up and down the staircase, and run through the marble halls. The galleries are filled with pages and courtiers in silk clothing, who go from group to group collecting later news in a low voice. On the large porches can be seen the ladies of honor, bathed in tears, bowing their heads and wiping their eyes with pretty embroidered handkerchiefs. In the orangery is a numerous assembly of doctors in long robes: one can see them through the panes gesticulating in their long sleeves, and shaking their wigs knowingly. The little Dauphin's tutor and squire are waiting before the door, anxious for the decision of the faculty. Scullions pass by without saluting them. The squire swears like a pagan; the tutor recites verses from Horace. And during this time down by the stables one can hear a long plaintive neighing. It is the Dauphin's little sorrel pony, whom the grooms are neglecting, and who calls sadly from his empty manger. And the King — where is his Majesty the King? The King has shut himself up in a room in a remote part of the castle. Their Majesties do not like to be seen weeping. But the Queen — that is different. Seated by the little prince's pillow, her beautiful face bathed in tears, she sobs bitterly before every one, just as a peasant mother would.

In his lace crib is the little Dauphin, whiter than the cushions on which he reposes, with closed eyelids. They think he is sleeping; but no, the little Dauphin does not sleep. He turns toward his mother, and seeing that she weeps, he says to her, «Madame my Queen, why do you weep? Do you think truly that I am going to die?» The Queen wishes to reply, but sobs prevent her speaking. «Pray do not cry, Madame my Queen.

You forget that I am the Dauphin, and Dauphins cannot die thus.» The Queen sobs more bitterly still, and the little Dauphin begins to be frightened. «Hola!» he says, «I do not wish to have Death come and take me; and I shall know how to prevent his coming here. Bring forth forty lancers, our strongest, to mount guard around our bed; a hundred cannon night and day; torches lighted beneath our windows. And unhappy Death if he dares to approach us then!» The Queen gives a sign to please the royal child. Forthwith, one can hear heavy cannon being rolled across the courtyard; and forty soldiers, halberds in hand, come and range themselves around the room: they are veterans, with gray moustaches. The little Dauphin claps his hands feebly as he sees them, and recognizing one he calls him by name, «Lorrain! Lorrain!» The old soldier takes a step towards the bed. «I love you well, my good Lorrain. Let me see your big sword. If Death comes to take me, we must kill him, must we not?» Lorrain replies, «Yes, Monseigneur,» as the big tears run down his bronzed cheeks.

At this moment the chaplain approaches the little Dauphin, and talks to him for some time in a low tone, showing him a crucifix. The little Dauphin listens with an astonished air; then suddenly interrupting, «I understand well what you say, Monsieur l'Abbé; but after all, could not my little friend Beppo die in my place, if we should give him a great deal of money?»

The chaplain continues talking to him in a low voice, and the little Dauphin looks more and more astonished. When the chaplain has finished, the little Dauphin resumes, with a heavy sigh, «All that you tell me is very sad, Monsieur l'Abbé, but one thing consoles me: up there, in the paradise of stars, I shall still be the Dauphin. I know that our good God is my cousin, and would not fail to treat me according to my rank.» Then he adds, turning to his mother, «Have my finest garments brought — my ermine cloak and velvet slippers. I wish to array myself for the angels, and enter paradise dressed as a Dauphin.»

A third time the chaplain bends over the little prince, and talks a long time in whispering tones. The royal child interrupts him in anger, in the midst of his discourse, and cries, «Then it is no use to be Dauphin,— it is nothing at all;» and not wishing to hear more, he turns toward the wall weeping.

Translation of Mary Corey.

JACK IS INVITED TO TAKE UP A «PROFESSION»

From ‹Jack›

«Do you hear, Jack?» resumed D'Argenton, with flashing eyes and outstretched arm. «In four years you will be a good workman; that is to say, the noblest, grandest thing that can exist in this world of slavery and servitude. In four years you will be that sacred, venerated thing, a good workman!»

Yes, indeed he heard it!—«a good workman.» Only he was bewildered and was trying to understand.

The child had seen workmen in Paris. There were some who lived in the Passage des Douze Maisons, and not far from the Gymnase there was a factory, from which he often watched them as they left work at about six o'clock; a crowd of dirty-looking men with their blouses all stained with oil, and their rough hands blackened and deformed by work.

The idea that he would have to wear a blouse struck him at once. He remembered the tone of contempt with which his mother would say: «Those are workmen, men in blouses,»—the care she took in the streets to avoid the contact of their soiled garments. Labassindre's fine speeches on the duties and influence of the workingman in the nineteenth century attenuated and contradicted, it is true, these vague impressions. But what he did understand, and that most clearly and bitterly, was that he must go away, leave the forest whose tree-tops he saw from the window, leave the Rivalses, leave his mother, his mother whom he had recovered at the cost of so much pain, and whom he loved so tenderly.

What on earth was she doing at that window all this time, seeming so indifferent to all that was going on around her? Within the last few minutes, however, she had lost her immovable indifference. A convulsive shudder seemed to shake her from head to foot, and the hand she held over her eyes closed over them as if she were hiding tears. Was it then so sad a sight that she beheld yonder in the country, on the far horizon where the sun sets, and where so many dreams, so many illusions, so many loves and passions sink and disappear, never to return?

« Then I shall have to go away? » inquired the child in a smothered voice, and the automatic air of one who lets his thought speak, the one thought that absorbed him.

At this artless question all the members of the tribunal looked at each other with a smile of pity; but over there at the window a great sob was heard.

« We shall start in a week, my lad, » answered Labassindre briskly. « I have not seen my brother for a long time. I shall avail myself of this opportunity to renew my acquaintance with the fire of my old forge, by Jove! »

As he spoke, he turned back his sleeve, distending the muscles of his brawny, hairy, tattooed arm, till they looked ready to burst.

« He is superb, » said Dr. Hirsch.

D'Argenton, however, who did not lose sight of the sobbing woman standing at the window, had an absent air, and a terrible frown gathering on his brow.

« You can go, Jack, » he said to the child, « and prepare to start in a week. »

Jack went down-stairs, dazed and stupefied, repeating to himself, « In a week! in a week! » The street door was open; he rushed out, bare-headed, just as he was, dashed through the village to the house of his friends, and meeting the Doctor, who was just going out, informed him in a few words of what had taken place.

Monsieur Rivals was indignant.

« A workman! They want to make a workman of you? Is that what they call looking after your prospects in life? Wait a moment. I am going to speak myself to monsieur your stepfather. »

The villagers who saw them pass by, the worthy Doctor gesticulating and talking out loud, and little Jack, bare-headed and breathless from running, said, « There is certainly some one very ill at Les Aulnettes. »

No one was ill, most assuredly. When the Doctor arrived they were sitting down to table; for on account of the capricious appetite of the master of the house, and as in all places where *ennui* reigns supreme, the hours for the meals were constantly being changed.

The faces around were cheerful; Charlotte could even be heard humming on the stairs as she came down from her room.

«I should like to say a word to you, M. d'Argenton,» said old Rivals with quivering lips.

The poet twirled his moustache:—

«Well, Doctor, sit down there. They shall give you a plate and you can say your word while you eat your breakfast.»

«No, thank you, I am not hungry; besides, what I have to say to you as well as to Madame»—he bowed to Charlotte, who had just come in—«is strictly private.»

«I think I can guess your errand,» said D'Argenton, who did not care for a *tête-à-tête* conversation with the Doctor. «It is about the child, is it not?»

«You are right; it is about the child.»

«In that case you can speak. These gentlemen know the circumstances, and my actions are always too loyal and too disinterested for me to fear the light of day.»

«But, my dear!» Charlotte ventured to say, shocked for many reasons at the idea of this discussion before strangers.

«You can speak, Doctor,» said D'Argenton coldly.

Standing upright in front of the table, the Doctor began:—

«Jack has just told me that you intend to send him as an apprentice to the iron works at Indret. Is this serious? Come!»

«Quite serious, my dear Doctor.»

«Take care,» pursued M. Rivals, restraining his anger; «that child has not been brought up for so hard a life. At a growing age you are going to throw him out of his element into new surroundings, a new atmosphere. His health, his life are involved. He has none of the requisites needed to bear this. He is not strong enough.»

«Oh! allow me, my dear colleague,» put in Dr. Hirsch solemnly.

M. Rivals shrugged his shoulders, and without even looking at him, went on:—

«It is I who tell you so, Madame.»

He pointedly addressed himself to Charlotte, who was singularly embarrassed by this appeal to her repressed feelings.

«Your child cannot possibly endure a life of this sort. You surely know him, you who are his mother. You know that his nature is a refined and delicate one, and that it will be unable to resist fatigue. And here I only speak of the physical pain. But do you not know what terrible sufferings a child so well gifted, with a mind so capable and ready to receive all kinds of knowledge, will feel in the forced inaction, the death of intellectual faculties to which you are about to condemn him?»

«You are mistaken, Doctor,» said D'Argenton, who was getting very angry. «I know the fellow better than any one. I have tried him. He is only fit for manual labor. His aptitudes lie there, and there only. And it is when I furnish him with the means of developing his aptitudes, when I put into his hands a magnificent profession, that instead of thanking me, my fine gentleman goes off complaining to strangers, seeking protectors outside of his own home.»

Jack was going to protest. His friend however saved him the trouble.

«He did not come to complain. He only informed me of your decision, and I said to him what I now repeat to him before you all:—'Jack, my child, do not let them do it. Throw yourself into the arms of your parents, of your mother who loves you, of your mother's husband, who for her sake must love you. Entreat them, implore them. Ask them what you have done to deserve to be thus degraded, to be made lower than themselves!'»

«Doctor,» exclaimed Labassindre, bringing his fist heavily down upon the table, making it tremble and shake, «the tool does not degrade the man, it ennobles him. The tool is the regenerator of mankind. Christ handled a plane when he was ten years of age.»

«That is indeed true,» said Charlotte, who at once conjured up the vision of her little Jack dressed for the procession of the Fête-Dieu as the child Jesus, armed with a little plane.

«Don't be taken in by such balderdash, Madame,» said the exasperated doctor. «To make a workman of your son is to separate him from you forever. If you were to send him to the other end of the world, he could not be further from your mind, from your heart; for you would have, in this case, means of drawing together again, whereas social distances are irremediable. You will see. The day will come when you will be ashamed of your child, when you will find his hands rough, his language coarse, his sentiments totally different from yours. He will stand one day before you, before his mother, as before a stranger of higher rank than himself,—not only humbled, but degraded.»

Jack, who had hitherto not uttered a word, but had listened attentively from a corner near the sideboard, was suddenly alarmed at the idea of any possible disaffection springing up between his mother and himself.

He advanced into the middle of the room, and steadying his voice: —

«I will not be a workman,» he said in a determined manner.

«O Jack!» murmured Charlotte, faltering.

This time it was D'Argenton who spoke.

«Oh, really! you will not be a workman? Look at this fine gentleman who will or who will not accept a thing that I have decided. You will not be a workman, eh? But you are quite willing to be clothed, fed, and amused. Well, I solemnly declare that I have had enough of you, you horrid little parasite; and that if you do not choose to work, I for my part refuse to be any longer your victim.»

He stopped abruptly, and passing from his mad rage to the chilly manner which was habitual to him: —

«Go up to your room,» he said; «I will consider what remains to be done.»

«What remains to be done, my dear D'Argenton, I will soon tell you.»

But Jack did not hear the end of Monsieur Rivals's phrase, D'Argenton with a shove having thrust him out.

The noise of the discussion reached him in his room, like the various parts in a great orchestra. He distinguished and recognized all the voices, but they melted one into the other, united by their resonance, and made a discordant uproar through which some bits of phrases were alone intelligible.

«It is an infamous lie.»

«Messieurs! Messieurs!»

«Life is not a romance.»

«Sacred blouse, *beûh! beûh!*»

At last old Rivals's voice could be heard thundering as he crossed the threshold: —

«May I be hanged if ever I put my foot in your house again!»

Then the door was violently slammed, and a great silence fell on the dining-room, broken only by the clatter of knives and forks.

They were breakfasting.

«You wish to degrade him, to make him something lower than yourself.» The child remembered that phrase, and he felt that this was indeed his enemy's intention.

Well, no; a thousand times no—he would not be a workman.

The door opened, and his mother came in.

She had cried a great deal, had shed real tears, tears such as furrow the cheek. For the first time, a mother showed herself in that pretty woman's face, an afflicted and sorrowing mother.

« Listen to me, Jack,» she said, striving to appear severe; « I must speak very seriously to you. You have made me very unhappy by putting yourself in open rebellion against your real friends, and by refusing to accept the situation they offer you. I am well aware that there is in the new existence —»

While she spoke, she carefully avoided meeting the child's eyes, for they had such an expression of desperate grief and heartfelt reproach that she would not have been able to resist their appeal.

« — That there is, in the new existence we have chosen for you, an apparent inconsistency with the life you have hitherto been leading. I confess that I was myself at first rather startled by it, but you heard, did you not, what was said to you? The position of a workman is no longer what it used to be; oh no! not at all the same thing, not at all. You must know that the time of the working-man has now come. The middle classes have had their day, the aristocracy likewise. Although, I must say, the aristocracy — Moreover, is it not more natural at your age, to allow yourself to be guided by those who love you, and who are experienced?»

A sob from the child interrupted her.

« Then you too send me away; you too send me away.»

This time the mother could no longer resist. She took him in her arms, clasped him passionately to her heart: —

« I send you away? How can you imagine such a thing? Is it possible? Come, be calm; don't tremble and give way like that. You know how I love you, and how, if it only depended on me, we would never leave each other. But we must be reasonable, and think a little of the future. Alas! the future is already dark enough for us.»

And in one of those outbursts of words that she still had sometimes when freed from the presence of the master, she endeavored to explain to Jack, with all kinds of hesitations and reticences, the irregularity of their position.

« You see, my darling, you are still very young; there are many things you cannot understand. Some day, when you are older, I will reveal to you the secret of your birth; quite a romance, my dear! Some day I will tell you the name of your father, and the unheard-of fatality of which your mother and yourself have been the victims. But for the present, what you must know and thoroughly comprehend, is that nothing here belongs to us, my poor child, and that we are absolutely dependent on him. How can I therefore oppose your departure, especially when I know that he wants you to leave for your good? I cannot ask him for anything more. He has already done so much for us. Besides, he is not rich, and this terrible artistic career is so expensive! He could not undertake the expense of your education. What will become of me between you two? We must come to a decision. Remember that it was a profession you were being given. Would you not be proud of being independent, of gaining your own livelihood, of being your own master?»

She saw at once by the flash in the child's eye that she had struck home; and in a low tone, in the caressing, coaxing voice of a mother, she murmured:—

«Do it for my sake, Jack; will you? Put yourself in a position that will enable you soon to gain your livelihood. Who knows if some day I may not be obliged myself to have recourse to you as my only protector, my only friend?»

Did she really think what she said? Was it a presentiment, one of those sudden glimpses into the future which unfold to us our destiny and reveal the failure and disappointments of our existence? Or had she been merely carried away in the whirlwind words of her impulsive sentimentality?

In any case she could not have found a better argument to convince that little generous spirit. The effect was instantaneous. The idea that his mother might want him, that he could help her by his work, suddenly decided him.

He looked her straight in the face.

«Swear that you will always love me, that you will never be ashamed of me when my hands are blackened!»

«If I shall love you, my Jack!»

Her only answer was to cover him with kisses, hiding her agitation and her remorse under her passionate embraces; but from that moment the wretched woman knew remorse, knew it for the rest of her life; and could never think of her child without feeling a stab in her heart.

He however, as though he understood all the shame, uncertainty, and terror concealed under these caresses, dashed towards the stairs, to avoid dwelling on it.

« Come, mamma, let us go down. I am going to tell him I accept his offer.»

Down-stairs the « Failures » were still at table. They were all struck by the grave and determined look on Jack's face.

« I beg your pardon,» he said to D'Argenton. « I did wrong in refusing your proposal. I now accept it, and thank you.»

THE CITY OF IRON AND FIRE

From ‹Jack›

The singer rose and stood upright in the boat, in which he and the child were crossing the Loire a little above Paimbœuf, and with a wide sweeping gesture of the arms, as if he would have clasped the river within them, exclaimed:—

« Look at that, old boy; is not that grand?»

Notwithstanding the touch of grotesqueness and commonplace in the actor's admiration, it was well justified by the splendid landscape unrolling before their eyes.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon. A July sun, a sun of melting silver, spread a long luminous pathway of rays upon the waters. In the air was a tremulous reverberation, a mist of light, through which appeared the gleaming light of the river, active and silent, flashing upon the sight with the rapidity of a mirage. Dimly seen sails high in the air, which in this dazzling hour seem pale as flax, pass in the distance as if in flight. They were great barges coming from Noirmoutiers, laden to the very edge with white salt sparkling all over with shining spangles, and worked by picturesque crews; men with the great three-cornered hat of the Breton salt-worker, and women whose great cushioned caps with butterfly wings were as white and glittering as the salt. Then there were coasting vessels like floating drays, their decks piled with sacks of flour and casks; tugs dragging interminable lines of barges, or perhaps some three-master of Nantes arriving from the other side of the world, returning to the native land after two years' absence, and moving up the river with a slow, almost solemn motion, as if bearing within it a silent contemplation of the old country, and the mysterious poetry belonging to all things that come from afar. Notwithstanding the July heat, a strong breeze blew freshly over the lovely scene, for the wind came up from the coast with the cheerful freshness of the open sea, and let it be guessed that a little further away, beyond those hurrying waves already abandoned by the calm tranquillity of still waters, lay the deep green of the limitless ocean, with its billows, its fogs, and its tempests.

« And Indret? where is it?» asks Jack.

« There, that island in front of us.»

In the silvery mist which enveloped the island, Jack saw confusedly lines of great poplars and tall chimneys, whence issued a thick filthy smoke, spreading over all, blackening even the sky above it. At the same time he heard a clamorous and resounding din, hammers falling on wrought and sheet iron, dull sounds, ringing sounds, variously re-echoed by the sonority of the water; and over everything a continuous and perpetual droning, as if the island had been a great steamer, stopped, and murmuring, moving its paddles while at anchor, and its machinery while yet motionless.

As the boat approached the shore, slowly and yet more slowly, — for the tide ran strongly and was hard to fight against, — the child began to distinguish long buildings with low roofs, blackened walls extending on all sides with uniform dreariness; then, on the banks of the river as far as the eye could reach, long lines of enormous boilers painted with red lead, the startling color giving a wildly fantastic effect. Government transports, steam launches, ranged alongside the quay, lay waiting till these boilers should be put on board by means of a great crane near at hand, which viewed from a distance looked like a gigantic gibbet.

At the foot of this gallows stood a man watching the approach of the boat.

« It is Roudic,» said the singer; and from the deepest depths he brought forth a formidable «hurrah!» which made itself heard even in the midst of all the din of forging and hammering.

« Is that you, young 'un?»

« Yes, by Jove, it is I; are there two such notes as mine in the whole world?»

The boat touched the shore, and the two brothers sprang into each other's arms with a mighty greeting.

They were alike; but Roudic was much older, and wanting in that embonpoint so quickly acquired by singers in the exercise of trills and sustained notes. Instead of the pointed beard of his brother, he was shaven, sunburnt; and his sailor's cap, a blue wool knitted cap, shaded a true Breton face, tanned by the sea, cut in granite, with small eyes, and a keen glance sharpened by the minute work of a fitter and adjuster.

« And how are all at home? » asked Labassindre. « Clarisse, Zénaïde, every one? »

« Every one is quite well, thank Heaven. Ah, ah! this is our new apprentice. He looks like a nice little chap; only he doesn't look over strong. »

« Strong as a horse, my dear fellow, and warranted by the Paris doctors. »

« So much the better, then, for ours is a roughish trade. And now, if you are ready, let us go and see the manager. »

They followed a long alley of fine trees that soon changed into a street, such as is found in small towns, bordered by white houses, clean and all alike. Here lived a certain number of the factory workmen, the foremen, and first hands. The others were located on the opposite bank, at Montagne or at Basse Indre.

At this hour all was silent, life and movement being concentrated within the iron works; and had it not been for the linen drying at the windows, the flower-pots ranged near the panes, the occasional cry of a child, or the rhythmical rocking of a cradle heard through some half-opened door, the place might have been deemed uninhabited.

« Oh! the flag's down, » said the singer, as they reached the gate leading to the workshops. « What frights that confounded flag has given me before now. »

And he explained to his « old Jack, » that five minutes after the arrival of the workmen for the opening hour, the flag over the gate was lowered, and thus it was announced that the doors were closed. So much the worse for those who were late; they were marked down as absent, and at the third offense dismissed.

While he was giving these explanations, his brother conferred with the gate-keeper, and they were admitted within the doors of the establishment. The din was frightful; whistlings, groanings, grindings, varying but never diminishing, were re-echoed from many vast triangular-roofed sheds, standing at intervals on a sloping ground intersected by numerous railways.

An iron city!

Their footsteps rang upon plates of metal incrusted in the earth. They picked their way amid heaps of bar iron, pig iron, ingots of copper; between rows of worn-out guns brought hither to be melted down, rusty outside, all black within and almost smoking still, venerable masters of fire about to perish by fire.

Roudic, as they passed along, pointed out the various quarters of the establishment: « This is the setting-up room, these the workshops of the great lathe and little lathe, the braziery, the forges, the foundry.» He had to shout, so deafening was the noise.

Jack, half dazed, looked with surprise through the workshop doors, nearly all open on account of the heat, at a swarming of upraised arms, of blackened faces, of machinery in motion in a cave-like darkness, dull and deep, lit up by brief flashes of red light.

Out poured the hot air, with mingled odors of coal, burned clay, molten iron and the impalpable black dust, sharp and burning, which in the sunlight had a metallic sparkle, the glitter of coal that may become diamond.

But what gave a special character to these formidable works was the perpetual commotion of both earth and air, a continual trepidation, something like the striving of a huge beast imprisoned beneath the foundry, whose groans and burning breath burst hissing out through the yawning chimneys. Jack, fearful of appearing too much of a novice, dared not ask what it was made this noise, which even at a distance had so impressed him. . . .

As they talked, they passed along the streets of the ironworks laid with rails, crowded at this hour, the working day just at an end, with a concourse of men of all kinds and sizes and trades; a motley of blouses, pilot jackets, the coats of the designers mixing with the uniforms of the overseers.

The gravity with which this deliverance from toil was effected struck Jack forcibly. He compared this scene with the cries, the jostling on the pavements which in Paris enliven the exit from the workshops, and make it as noisy as that of a school. Here, rule and discipline were sensibly felt, just as on board a man-of-war.

A warm mist of steam floated over this mass of human beings, a steam that the sea breeze had not yet dispersed, and which hung like a heavy cloud in the stillness of this July evening. From the now silent workshops evaporated the odors of the forge. Steam whistled forth in the gutters, sweat stood on all the foreheads, and the panting that had puzzled Jack a little while ago had given place to a breath of relief from these two thousand chests wearied with the day's labor.

As he passed through the crowd, Labassindre was soon recognized.

« Hullo! young 'un, how are you? »

He was surrounded, his hand eagerly shaken, and from one to another passed the words:—

« Here, look at Roudic's brother, the fellow who makes four thousand pounds a year just by singing.»

Every one wished to see him, for one of the legends of the workshops was this supposed fortune of the quondam blacksmith, and since his departure more than one young fellow-worker had searched to the very bottom of his larynx, to try if the famous note, the note worth millions, were not by some happy chance to be found there.

In the midst of this cortège of admirers, whom his theatrical costume impressed still more, the singer walked along with his head in the air, talking and laughing, casting « Good morning, Father So-and-so! Good morning, Mother What-'s-your-name! » towards the little houses enlivened by women's faces looking out, towards the public-houses and cook-shops which were frequent in this part of Indret; where also hawkers of all kinds held sway, exposing their merchandise in the open air: blouses, shoes, hats, kerchiefs, all the ambulating trumpery to be found in the neighborhood of camps, barracks, and factories.

As they made their way through this display of wares, Jack imagined he saw a familiar face, a smile, parting the various groups to reach him; but it was only a lightning flash, a mere vision swept away at once by the ever changing tide of the mass flowing away and dispersing through the great industrial city, and spreading itself over to the other side of the river in long ferry-boats, active, numerous, heavily laden, as if it were the passage of an army.

Evening was closing in over the dispersing crowd. The sun went down. The wind freshened, moving the poplars like palms; and the spectacle was imposing of the toiling island in its turn sinking to repose, restored to nature for the night. As the smoke cleared, masses of verdure became visible between the workshops. The river could be heard lapping the banks; and the swallows, skimming the water with tiny twitter, fluttered around the great boilers ranged along the quay.

THE WRATH OF A QUEEN

From ‹Kings in Exile›

All the magic beauty of that June night poured in through the wide-open casement in the great hall. A single lighted candelabrum scarcely disturbed the mystery of the moonlight, which streamed in like a «milky way.» On the table, across some dusty old papers, lay a crucifix of oxydized silver. By the side of the crucifix was a thick broad sheet of parchment, covered with a big and tremulous writing. It was the death-warrant of royalty, wanting nothing but the signature, one stroke of the pen, and a strong and violent effort of will to give this; and that was the reason why this weak King hesitated, sitting motionless, his elbows resting on the table, by the lighted candles prepared for the royal seal.

Near him, anxious, prying, yet soft and smooth, like a night-moth or the black bat that haunts ruins, Lebeau, the confidential valet, watched him and silently encouraged him; for they had arrived at the decisive moment that the gang had for months expected, with alternate hopes and fears, with all the trepidation, all the uncertainty attending a business dependent upon such a puppet as this King. Notwithstanding the magnetism of this overpowering desire, Christian, pen in hand, could not bring himself to sign. Sunk down in his arm-chair, he gazed at the parchment, and was lost in thought. It was not that he cared for that crown, which he had neither wished for nor loved, which as a child he had found too heavy, and that later in life had bowed him down and crushed him by its terrible responsibilities. He had felt no scruple in laying it aside, leaving it in the corner of a room which he never entered, forgetting it as much as possible when he was out; but he was scared at the sudden determination, the irrevocable step he was about to take. However, there was no other way of procuring money for his new existence, no other means of meeting the hundred and twenty thousand pounds' worth of bills he had signed, on which payment would soon be due, and which the usurer, a certain Pichery, picture-dealer, refused to renew. Could he allow an execution to be put in at Saint-Mandé? And the Queen, the royal child; what would become of them in that case? If he must have a scene — for he foresaw the terrible clamor his cowardice must rouse — was it not better to have it now, and brave once for all anger and recriminations? And then — all this was not really the determining reason.

He had promised the Comtesse to sign this renunciation; and on the faith of this promise, Séphora had consented to let her husband start alone for London, and had accepted the mansion Avenue de Messine, and the title and name that published her to the world as the king's mistress, reserving, however, anything further till the day when Christian himself would bring her the deed, signed by his own hand. She assigned for this conduct the reasons of a woman in love: he might, later on, return to Illyria, abandon her for the throne and power; she would not be the first person whom these terrible State reasons have made tremble and weep. D'Axel, Wattelet, all the *gommeux* of the Grand Club little guessed when the king, quitting the Avenue de Messine, rejoined them at the club with heavy fevered eyes, that he had spent the evening on a divan, by turns repulsed or encouraged, his feelings played upon, his nerves unstrung by the constant resistance; rolling himself at the feet of an immovable, determined woman, who with a supple opposition abandoned to his impassioned embrace only the cold little Parisian hands, so skillful in defense and evasion, while she imprinted on his lips the scorching flame of the enrapturing words: — «Oh! when you have ceased to be king, I shall be all yours — all yours!» She made him pass through all the dangerous phases of passion and coldness; and often at the theatre, after an icy greeting and a rapid smile, would slowly draw off her gloves and cast him a tender glance; then, putting her bare hand in his, she would seem to offer it up to his ardent kiss.

«Then you say, Lebeau, that Pichery will not renew?»

«He will not, sire. If the bills are not paid, the bailiffs will be put in.»

How well he emphasized with a despairing moan the word «bailiffs,» so as to convey the feeling of all the sinister formalities that would follow: bills protested, an execution, the royal hearth desecrated, the family turned out of doors. Christian saw nothing of all this. His imagination carried him far away to the Avenue de Messine: he saw himself arriving there in the middle of the night, eager and quivering; ascending with stealthy and hurried step the heavily carpeted stairs, entering the room where the night-light burned, mysteriously veiled under lace:—« It is done—I am no longer king. You are mine, mine.» And the loved one held out her hand.

« Come,» he exclaimed, starting out of his fleeting dream.

And he signed.

The door opened and the Queen appeared. Her presence in Christian's rooms at such an hour was so unforeseen, so unexpected, they had lived so long apart, that neither the King in the act of signing his infamy, nor Lebeau, who stood watching him, turned round at the slight noise she made. They thought it was Boscovich coming up from the garden. Gliding lightly like a shadow, she was already near the table, and had reached the two accomplices, when Lebeau saw her. With her finger on her lips she motioned him to be silent, and continued to advance, wishing to convict the king in the very act of his treachery, and avoid all evasion, subterfuge, or useless dissimulation; but the valet set her order at defiance and gave the alarm, « The Queen, sire!»

The Dalmatian, furious, struck straight in the face of this malevolent caitiff with the powerful hand of a woman accustomed to handle the reins; and drawing herself up erect, waited till the wretch had disappeared before she addressed the king.

« What has happened, my dear Frédérique? and to what am I indebted for—?»

Standing bent over the table that he strove to hide, in a graceful attitude that showed off his silk jacket embroidered in pink, he smiled, and although his lips were rather pale, his voice remained calm, his speech easy, with that polished elegance which never left him when addressing his wife, and which placed a barrier between them like a hard lacquer screen adorned with flowery and intricate arabesques. With one word, one gesture, she put aside the barrier behind which he would fain have sheltered himself.

« Oh! no phrases, no grimacing—if you please. I know what you were writing there. Do not try to give me the lie.»

Then drawing nearer, overwhelming his timorous objection by her haughty bearing:—

« Listen to me, Christian,» and there was something in her tone that gave an impression of solemnity to her words; « listen to me: you have made me suffer cruelly since I became your wife. I have never said anything but once—the first time, you remember. After that, when I saw that you had ceased to love me, I left you to yourself. Not that I was ignorant of anything you did — not one of your infidelities, not one of your follies remained unknown to me. For you must indeed be mad, mad like your father, who died of exhaustion, mad with love for Lola; mad like your grandfather John, who died in a shameful delirium, foaming and framing kisses with the death-rattle in his throat, and uttering words that made the Sisters of Charity grow pale. Yes, it is the same fevered blood, the same hellish passion that devours you. At Ragusa, on the nights of the sortie, it was at Fœdora's that they sought you. I knew it, I knew that she had left her theatre to follow you. I never uttered a single reproach. The honor of your name was saved. And when the King was absent from the ramparts, I took care his place should not be empty. But here in Paris —"

Till now she had spoken slowly, coldly, in a tone of pity and maternal reproof, as though inspired thereto by the downcast eyes and pouting mouth of the King, who looked like a vicious child receiving a scolding. But the name of Paris exasperated her. A city without faith, a city cynical and accursed, its blood-stained stones ever ready for sedition and barricades! What possessed these poor fallen kings, that they came to take refuge in this Sodom! It was Paris, it was its atmosphere tainted by carnage and vice that completed the ruin of the historical houses; it was this that had made Christian lose what the maddest of his ancestors had always known how to preserve — the respect and pride of their race. Oh! When on the very day of their arrival, the first night of their exile, she had seen him so excited, so gay, while all around him were secretly weeping, Frédérique had guessed the humiliation and shame she would have to undergo. Then in one breath, without pausing, with cutting words that lashed the pallid face of the royal rake, and striped it red as with a whip, she recalled one after the other all his follies, his rapid descent from pleasure to vice, and vice to crime.

"You have deceived me under my very eyes, in my own house; adultery has sat at my table, it has brushed against my dress. When you were tired of that dollish little face who had not even the grace to conceal her tears, you went to the gutter, wallowing shamelessly in the slime and mud of the streets, and bringing back the dregs of your orgies, of your sickly remorse, all the pollution of the mire. Remember how I saw you totter and stammer on that morning, when for the second time you lost your throne. What have you not done! Holy Mother of angels! What have you not done! You have traded with the royal seal, you have sold crosses and titles.»

And in a lower tone, as though she feared lest the stillness and silence of the night might hear, she added:—

«You have stolen, yes, stolen! Those diamonds, those stones torn from the crown—it was you who did it, and I allowed my faithful Greb to be suspected and dismissed. The theft being known, it was necessary to find a sham culprit to prevent the real one ever being discovered. For this has been my one, my constant preoccupation: to uphold the King, to keep him untouched; to accept everything for that purpose, even the shame which in the eyes of the world will end by sullying me. I had adopted a watchword that sustained me, and encouraged me in my hours of trial: 'All for the crown!' And now you want to sell it—that crown that has cost me such anguish and such tears; you want to barter it for gold, for the lifeless mask of that Jewess, whom you had the indecency to bring face to face with me to-day.»

Crushed, bending low his head, he had hitherto listened without a word, but the insult directed against the woman he loved roused him. Looking fixedly at the queen, his face bearing the traces of her cutting words, he said politely, but very firmly:—

«Well, no, you are mistaken. The woman you mention has had nothing to do with the determination I have taken. What I am doing is done for you, for me, for our common happiness. Tell me, are you not weary of this life of privations and expedients? Do you think that I am ignorant of what is going on here; that I do not suffer when I see you harassed by a pack of tradespeople and duns? The other day when that man was shouting in the yard I was coming in and heard him. Had it not been for Rosen I would have crushed him under the wheels of my phaeton. And you—you were watching his departure behind the curtains of your window. A nice position for a Queen. We owe money to every one. There is a universal outcry against us. Half the servants are unpaid. The tutor even has received nothing for the last ten months. Madame de Silvis pays herself by majestically wearing your old dresses. And there are days when my councilor, the keeper of the royal seals, borrows from my valet the wherewithal to buy snuff. You see I am well acquainted with the state of things. And you do not know my debts yet. I am over head and ears in debt. Everything is giving way around us. A pretty state of things, indeed; you will see that diadem of yours sold one day at the corner of a street with old knives and forks.»

Little by little, gradually carried away by his own scoffing nature and the jesting habits of his set, he dropped the moderate tone he commenced with, and in his insolent little snuffling voice began to dwell upon the ludicrous side of the situation, with jeers and mockery, borrowed no doubt from Séphora, who never lost an opportunity of demolishing by her sneering observations the few remaining scruples of her lover.

«You will accuse me of making phrases, but it is you who deafen yourself with words. What, after all, is that crown of Illyria that you are always talking about? It is worth nothing except on a king's head; elsewhere it is obstruction, a useless thing, which for flight is carried hidden away in a bonnet-box or exposed under a glass shade like the laurels of an actor or the blossoms of a *concierge's* bridal wreath. You must be convinced of one thing, Frédérique. A king is truly king only on the throne, with power to rule; fallen, he is nothing, less than nothing, a rag. Vainly do we cling to etiquette, to our titles, always bringing forward our Majesty, on the panels of our carriages, on the studs of our cuffs, hampering ourselves with an empty ceremonial. It is all hypocrisy on our part, and mere politeness and pity on the part of those who surround us — our friends and our servants. Here I am King Christian II. for you, for Rosen, for a few faithful ones. Outside I become a man like the rest, M. Christian Two. Not even a surname, only 'Christian,' like an actor of the Gaété.»

He stopped, out of breath; he did not remember having ever spoken so long standing. The shrill notes of the night-birds, the prolonged trills of the nightingales, broke the silence of the night. A big moth that had singed its wings at the lights flew about, thumping against the walls. This fluttering distress and the smothered sobs of the Queen were the only sounds to be heard; she knew how to meet rage and violence, but was powerless before this scoffing banter, so foreign to her sincere nature; it found her unarmed, like the valiant soldier who expects straight blows and feels only the harassing stings of insects. Seeing her break down, Christian thought her vanquished, and to complete his victory he put the finishing touch to the burlesque picture he had drawn of kings in exile. «What a pitiful figure they cut, all these poor princes *in partibus*, figurants of royalty, who drape themselves in the frippery of the principal characters, and declaim before the empty benches without a farthing of receipts! Would they not be wiser if they held their peace and returned to the obscurity of common life? For those who have money there is some excuse. Their riches give them some right to cling to these grandeurs. But the others, the poor cousins of Palermo for instance, crowded together in a tiny house with their horrid Italian cookery. It smells of onions when the door is opened. Worthy folk certainly, but what an existence! And those are not the worst off. The other day a Bourbon, a real Bourbon, ran after an omnibus. 'Full, sir,' said the conductor. But he kept on running. 'Don't I tell you it is full, my good man?' He got angry; he would have wished to be called 'Monseigneur'—as if that should be known by the tie of his cravat! Operetta kings, I tell you, Frédérique. It is to escape from this ridiculous position, to insure a dignified and decent existence, that I have made up my mind to sign this.»

And he added, suddenly revealing the tortuous Slavonic nature molded by the Jesuits:—«Moreover, this signature is really a mere farce. Our own property is returned to us, that is all, and I shall not consider myself in the slightest degree bound by this. Who knows?—these very thousands of pounds may help us to recover the throne.»

The Queen impetuously raised her head, looked him straight in the eyes for a moment, then shrugged her shoulders, saying:

«Do not make yourself out viler than you are. You know that when once you have signed—but no. The truth is, you lack strength and fortitude; you desert your kingly post at the most perilous moment, when a new society, that will acknowledge neither God nor master, pursues with its hatred the representatives of Divine right, makes the heavens tremble over their heads and the earth under their steps. The assassin's knife, bombs, bullets, all serve their purpose. Treachery and murder are on every side. In the midst of our pageantry or our festivities, the best of us as well as the worst, not one of us does not start if only a man steps forward out of the crowd. Hardly a petition that does not conceal a dagger. On leaving his palace what king is certain of returning alive? And this is the hour you choose to leave the field!»

«Ah! if fighting could do it!» eagerly said Christian II. «But to struggle as we do against ridicule, against poverty, against all the petty meannesses of life, and feel that we only sink deeper every day—»

A ray of hope lit up her eyes:—«Is it true? would you fight? Then listen.»

Breathlessly she related, in a few rapid words, the expedition she and Elysée had been preparing for the last three months by letters, proclamations, and dispatches, which Father Alphée, ever on the move, carried from one mountain village to the other. This time it was not to the nobility they appealed, but to the people; the muleteers, the porters of Ragusa, the market-gardeners of Breno, of La Brazza, the islanders who go to market in their feluccas, the nation which had remained faithful to the monarchical tradition, which was ready to rise and die for its king, on condition that he should lead them. Companies were forming, the watchword was already circulating, only the signal now remained to be given.

The Queen, hurling her words at Christian to rout his weakness by a vigorous charge, had a cruel pang when she saw him shake his head, showing an indifference which was even greater than his discouragement. Perhaps at the bottom of his heart he was annoyed that the expedition should have been so far organized without his knowledge. But he did not believe in the feasibility of the plan. It would not be possible to advance into the country; they would be compelled to hold the islands, and devastate a beautiful country with very little chance of success: a second edition of the Duc de Palma's adventure, a useless effusion of blood.

«No, really, my dear Frédérique, you are led away by the fanaticism of your chaplain and the wild enthusiasm of that hot-headed Gascon. I also have my sources of information, far more reliable than yours. The truth is, that in Dalmatia, as in many other countries, monarchy has had its day. They are tired of it, they will have no more of it.»

«Oh! I know the coward who will have no more of it,» said the Queen. And she went out hurriedly, leaving Christian much surprised that the scene should have ended so abruptly. He hastily thrust the deed into his pocket, and prepared to go out in his turn, when Frédérique reappeared, accompanied this time by the little prince.

Roused out of his sleep and hurriedly dressed, Zara, who had passed from the hands of his nurse to those of the Queen without a word having been uttered, opened wide his bewildered eyes under his auburn curls, but asked no questions; he remembered confusedly in his poor little dizzy head similar awakenings for hasty flights, in the midst of pallid faces and breathless exclamations. It was thus that he had acquired the habit of passive obedience; that he allowed himself to be led anywhere, provided the Queen called him in her grave and resolute voice, and held ready for his childish weakness the shelter of her tender arms and the support of her strong shoulder. She had said: «Come!» and he had come with confidence, surprised only at the surrounding silence, so different from those other stormy nights, with their visions of blood and flames, roar of cannon, and rattle of musketry.

He saw the King standing, no longer the careless good-natured father who at times surprised him in his bed or crossed the schoolroom with an encouraging smile, but a stern father, whose expression of annoyance became more accentuated as he saw them enter. Frédérique, without uttering one word, led the child to the feet of Christian II. and abruptly kneeling, placed him before her, crossing his little fingers in her joined hands:—

«The king will not listen to me, perhaps he will listen to you, Zara. Come, say with me, ‹Father.›» The timid voice repeated, «Father.»

«‹My father! my king! I implore! do not despoil your child. Do not deprive him of the crown he is to wear one day. Remember that it is not yours alone; it comes from afar, from God himself, who gave it six hundred years ago to the house of Illyria. God has chosen me to be a king, father. It is my inheritance, my treasure; you have no right to take it from me.›»

The little prince accompanied his fervent murmur with the imploring looks of a supplicant; but Christian turned away his head, shrugged his shoulders, and furious though still polite, he muttered a few words between his teeth: «Exaggeration! most improper; turn the child's head.» Then he tried to withdraw and gain the door. With one bound the Queen was on her feet, caught sight of the table from which the parchment had disappeared, and comprehending at once that the infamous deed was signed, that the king had it in his possession, gave a despairing shriek:—

« Christian! »

He continued to advance towards the door.

She made a step forward, picking up her dress as if to pursue him; then suddenly said:—

« Well, be it so.»

He stopped short and turned round. She was standing before the open window, her foot upon the narrow stone balcony, with one arm clasping her son ready to bear him into death, the other extended menacingly towards the cowardly deserter. The moon lit up from without this dramatic group.

« To an operetta King, a Queen of tragedy,» she said, stern and terrible. « If you do not burn this instant what you have just signed, and swear on the cross that it will never be repeated, your race is ended, crushed, wife and child, there on the stones.»

Such earnestness seemed to inspire her vibrating tone, her splendid figure bent towards the emptiness of space as though to spring, that the King, terrified, dashed forward to stop her.

« Frédérique! »

At the cry of his father, at the quiver of the arm that held him, the child—who was entirely out of the window—thought that all was finished, that they were about to die. He never uttered a word nor a moan; was he not going with his mother? Only, his tiny hands clutched the queen's neck convulsively, and throwing back his head with his fair hair hanging down, the little victim closed his eyes before the appalling horror of the fall.

Christian could no longer resist. The resignation, the courage of this child, who of his future kingly duties already knew the first—to die well—overcame him. His heart was bursting. He threw upon the table the crumpled parchment which for a moment he had been nervously holding in his hand, and fell sobbing in an arm-chair. Frédérique, still suspicious, read the deed through from the first line to the very signature, then going up to a candle, she burned it till the flame scorched her fingers, shaking the ashes upon the table; she then left the room, carrying off her son, who was already falling asleep in her arms in his heroically tragic attitude.

Translation of Laura Ensor and E. Bartow.

MADAME DU DEFFAND

(MARIE DE VICHY-CHAMROND)

(1697-1780)

Madame du Deffand is interesting as a personality, a type, and an influence. Living through nearly the whole of the eighteenth century, she assimilated its wealth of new ideas, and was herself a product of the thought-revolution already kindling the spirit of 1789.

She very early showed her mental independence by puzzling questions upon religion. The eloquent Massillon attempted to win her to orthodoxy. But he soon gave up the task, told the Sisters to buy her a catechism, and went off declaring her charming. The inefficacy of the catechism was proved later, when the precocious girl developed into the graceful, unscrupulous society woman. She was always fascinating to the brightest men and women of her own and other lands. But the early years of social triumph, when she still had the beautiful eyes admired by Voltaire, are less significant than the nearly thirty years of blindness in the convent of St. Joseph, which after her affliction she made her home. Here she held her famous receptions for the literary and social celebrities of Paris. Here Mademoiselle Lespinasse endured a miserable ten years as her companion, then rebelled against her exactions, and left to establish a rival salon of her own, aided by her devoted D'Alembert. His preference Madame du Deffand never forgave. Henceforth she opposed philosophy, and demanded from her devotees only stimulus and amusement. It was here that Horace Walpole found the «blind old woman» in her tub-like chair, and began the friendship and intellectual flirtation of fifteen years. It proved a great interest in her life, notwithstanding Walpole's dread of ridicule at a suggestion of romance between his middle-aged self and this woman twenty years older.

Madame du Deffand

She was a power in the lives of many famous people, intimate with Madame de Staël, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Madame de Choiseul, the Duchess of Luxembourg, Madame Necker, Hume, Madame de

Genlis. In her salon old creeds were argued down, new ideas disseminated, and *bons mots* and witty gossip circulated. She has recounted what went on, and explained the reign of clever women in her century. Ignoring her blindness, she lived her life as gayly as she could in visiting, feasting, opera-going, and letter-writing. But even her social supremacy and brilliant correspondence with Voltaire, Walpole, and others, did not satisfy her. She wished to appeal to the heart, and she appealed only to the head. Of all ills she most dreaded ennui, and the very dread of it made her unhappy. She became more and more insufficient to herself, until at eighty-three she died with clear-sighted indifference.

«She was perhaps the wittiest woman who ever lived,» says Saintsbury. Hers was an inextinguishable wit, always alert, epigrammatic, enriching the language with proverbial phrases.

During her life Voltaire's science of unbelief and Rousseau's appeal to nature and sentiment were stimulating Europe. For Rousseau, Madame du Deffand had no respect; but Voltaire's philosophy appealed to her egotism. It bade a human being investigate his own puzzles, and seek solution in himself. Madame du Deffand agreed, but failed to find satisfaction in her anxious analysis; she envied believers in God, and longed for illusions, yet allowed herself none. Jealous, exacting, critical, with all the arrogance of the old aristocracy, she was as merciless to herself as to others. «All my judgments have been false and daring and too hasty. . . . I have never known any one perfectly. . . . To whom then can I have recourse?» she cries despairingly.

Sainte-Beuve emphasizes her noblest quality: with all her faults she was true. She lived out her life frankly, boldly, without self-deception or imposition. So in the entertaining volumes of her letters and pen-portraits of acquaintances, she has left a valuable record. She takes us back a century, and shows not only how people looked and what they did, but how they thought and felt.

TO THE DUCHESSE DE CHOISEUL

PARIS, Sunday, December 28th, 1766.

Do you know, dear Grandmama [a pet name], that you are the greatest philosopher that ever lived? Your predecessors spoke equally well, perhaps, but they were less consistent in their conduct. All your reasonings start from the same sentiment, and that makes the perfect accord one always feels between what you say and what you do. I know very well why, loving you madly, I am ill at ease with you. It is because I know that you must pity everybody who is unlike yourself. My desire to please you, the brief time that I am permitted with you, and my eagerness to profit by it, all trouble, embarrass, intimidate me and discompose me.

I exaggerate, I utter platitudes; and end by being disgusted with myself, and eager to rectify the impression I may have made upon you.

You wish me to write to M. de Choiseul, and to make my letter pretty and bright. Ah, indeed! I'm the ruler of my own imagination, am I! I depend upon chance. A purpose to do or to say such or such a thing takes away the possibility. I am not in the least like you. I do not hold in my hands the springs of my spirit. However, I will write to M. de Choiseul. I will seize a propitious moment. The surest means of making it come is to feel hurried.

I am sending you an extract from an impertinent little pamphlet entitled 'Letter to the Author of the Justification of Jean Jacques.' You will see how it treats our friend. I am not sure that it should be allowed; whether M. de Choiseul should not talk to M. de Sartines about it. It is for you to decide, dear Grandmama, if it is suitable, and if M. de Choiseul ought to permit licenses so impertinent.

I am dying to see you. In spite of my fear, in spite of my dreads, I am convinced that you love me because I love you.

TO MR. CRAWFORD

SUNDAY, March 9th, 1766.

I READ your letter to Madame de Forcalquier, or rather I gave it to her to read. I thought from her tone that she liked it, but she will not commit herself. She is more than incomprehensible. The Trinity is not more mysterious. She is composed of systems, which she does not understand herself; great words, great principles, great strains of music, of which nothing remains. However, I am of your opinion, that she is worth more than all my other acquaintances. She agrees that it would be delightful to have you *live* in this country; but if she were only to see you *en passant*, it hardly matters whether you came or not; that she has not forgotten you, but that she will forget you. Eh! Why shouldn't she forget you? She does not know you. . . . A hundred speeches of the sort which vex me.

They say of people who have too much vivacity that they were put in too hot an oven. They might say of her, on the contrary, that she is underdone. She is the sketch of a beautiful work, but it is not finished. What is certain is, that her sentiments, if she has sentiments, are sincere, and that she does not bore you. I showed her your letter because I thought that would give you pleasure; but be sure that no one in the world, not even she, shall see what you write me in future except Niart [her secretary], who as you know is a well.

I have just made you a fine promise that I will not show your letters; perhaps I shall never be able to show them. Truly, truly, I am like Madame de Forcalquier, and do not know you!

I spent three hours with Mr. Walpole yesterday, but only half an hour alone with him. Lord George and his wife returned his short call, but your Dr. James stayed there all the time. He is a very gloomy, uninteresting man.

Have you seen Jean Jacques? Is he still in London? Have you seen your father? Imagine yourself *tête-à-tête* with me in the corner of the fireplace, and answer all my questions, but especially those which concern your health. Have you seen the doctors? Have they ordered you the waters? And tell me too, honestly, if I shall ever see you again. Reflect that you are only twenty-five years old, that I am a hundred, and that it only requires a brief kindness to put pleasure in my life. No, I will not assume the pathetic. Do just what pleases you.

TO HORACE WALPOLE

Tuesday, August 5th, 1766.

I have received your letter of July 31st—no number, sheets of different sizes. All these observations mean nothing, unless it is that a person without anything to do or to think occupies herself with puerile things. Indeed, I should do very wrong not to profit by all your lessons, and to persist in the error of believing in friendship, and regarding it as a good; no, no; I renounce my errors, and am absolutely persuaded that of all illusions that is the most dangerous.

You who are the apostle of this wise doctrine, receive my confession and my vows never to love, never to seek to be loved by any one; but tell me if it is permitted to desire the return of agreeable persons; if one may long for news of them, and if to be interested in them and to let them know it is to lack virtue, good sense, and proper behavior. I am awaiting enlightenment. I cannot doubt your sincerity; you have given me too many proofs of it; explain yourself without reserve.

WEDNESDAY, 6th.

Of all the things in your letter, what struck me the most yesterday were your moralizings on friendship, which forced me to reply at once. I was interrupted by Monsieur and Madame de Beauvan, who came to take me to supper with them in the country at the good Duchess of Saint-Pierre's. I returned early. I did not close my eyes during the night. I woke up Niart [her secretary] earlier than usual to go on with my letter, and to re-read me yours. I am better pleased with it this morning than I was yesterday. The matter of friendship shocked me less. I find that the conclusion is—let us be friends without friendship. Ah well, so be it; I consent. Perhaps it is agreeable; let us learn by experience, and for that—see each other the oftener! In truth, you have only a comic actress, a deaf woman, and some chickens to leave, as you have only a blind woman and many goslings to find; but I promise you that the blind woman will have much to ask and much to tell.

I do not know what to say to you about your ministry. You have entertained me so little with politics, that if others had not informed me, all that goes on with you would be less intelligible to me than the affairs of China. They have told me something of the character of the count; and as for this certain good comrade [Conway], I think I know him perfectly. I am pleased that he has remained, but not that he does not oppose your philosophy. All your opinions are beautiful and praiseworthy; but if I were in his place I should certainly hinder you from making use of them, and not regulate my conduct by your moderation and disinterestedness. Oh! as for my lord, you cannot keep him,—that's the public cry. It seems to me that the brother and sister-in-law are not pleased. Do you not detest the people? From the agrarian law to your monument, your lamps, and your black standard, its joy, its sadness, its applause, its complaints, are all odious to me. But I am going back to speak to you about yourself. You say that your fortune, instead of augmenting, will suffer diminution. I am much afraid of that. No liberty without a competency. Remember that. If your economy falls upon your trips to France I shall be miserable. But listen to this without getting vexed.

I possess, as you know, a small lodging-room belonging to me, little worthy of the son of Robert Walpole, but which may satisfy the philosopher Horace. If he found it convenient, he could occupy it without incurring the slightest ridicule. He can consult sensible people, and while waiting, be persuaded that it is not my personal interest which induces me to offer it to him.

Honestly, my mentor, you could not do better than take it. You would be near me or a hundred leagues from me if you liked it better. It would not engage you to any attention nor any assiduity; we would renew our vows against friendship. It would even be necessary to render more observance to the Idol [Comtesse de Boufflers]; for who could be shocked, if not she? Pont-de-Veyle, who approves and advises this arrangement, claims that even the Idol would find nothing to oppose. Think of that.

. . . .

Grandmama returned yesterday morning. My favor with her is better established. She will take supper with me Friday; and as the supper was arranged without foreseeing that she would be there, she will find a company which will not exactly suit her,—among others the Idol, and the Archbishop of Toulouse.

I shall have many things to tell you when I see you. It may be that they will hardly interest you, but it will be the world of my Strawberry Hill.

You agree with me about the letters, which pleases me. I believe myself a genius when I find myself in agreement with you. This Prince Geoffrin is excellent. Surely heaven is witness that I do not love you, but I am forced to find you very agreeable.

Are you waiting until your arrival here to give a jug to the Maréchale de Luxembourg? I see no necessity of making a present to the Idol; incense, incense, that is all it wants!

I have a great desire that you should read a Memoir of La Chalottais; it is very rare, very much «prohibited,» but I am intriguing to get it.

M. de Beauvan begs you to send me a febrifuge for him. It is from Dr. James, I think. There are two kinds; one is mild and the other violent. He requires a louis's worth of each.

You are mightily deceiving yourself if you think Voltaire author of the analysis of the romance of 'Héloise.' The author is a man from Bordeaux, a friend of M. de Secondat. Àpropos of Voltaire, he has had the King of Prussia sounded to know if he would consent to give him asylum at Wesel in case he were obliged to leave his abode. This his Majesty has very willingly granted.

Good-by. I am counting upon being able in future to give you news of your court and your ministry. I have made a new acquaintance, who is a favorite of Lord Bute and the most intimate friend of Lord Holderness. I do not doubt that this lord is aiming at my Lord Rochefort's place, who they say scarcely troubles himself about the embassy.

Write me, I beg you, at least once a week.

Tell me if M. Crawford is in Scotland.

It is thought that the first news from Rome will inform us of the death of Chevalier Macdonald.

PORTRAIT OF HORACE WALPOLE

November, 1765.

No, no! I do not want to draw your likeness; nobody knows you less than I. Sometimes you seem to me what I wish you were, sometimes what I fear you may be, and perhaps never what you really are. I know very well that you have a great deal of wit of all kinds and all styles, and you must know it better than any one.

But your character should be painted, and of that I am not a good judge. It would require indifference, or impartiality at least. However, I can tell you that you are a very sincere man, that you have principles, that you are brave, that you pride yourself upon your firmness; that when you have come to a decision, good or bad, nothing induces you to change it, so that your firmness sometimes resembles obstinacy. Your heart is good and your friendship strong, but neither tender nor facile. Your fear of being weak makes you hard. You are on your guard against all sensibility. You cannot refuse to render valuable services to your friends; you sacrifice your own interest to them, but you refuse them the slightest of favors. Kind and humane to all about you, you do not give yourself the slightest trouble to please your friends in little ways.

Your disposition is very agreeable although not very even. All your ways are noble, easy, and natural. Your desire to please does not lead you into affectation. Your knowledge of the world and your experience have given you a great contempt for men, and taught you how to live with them. You know that all their assurances go for nothing. In exchange you give them politeness and consideration, and all those who do not care about being loved are content with you.

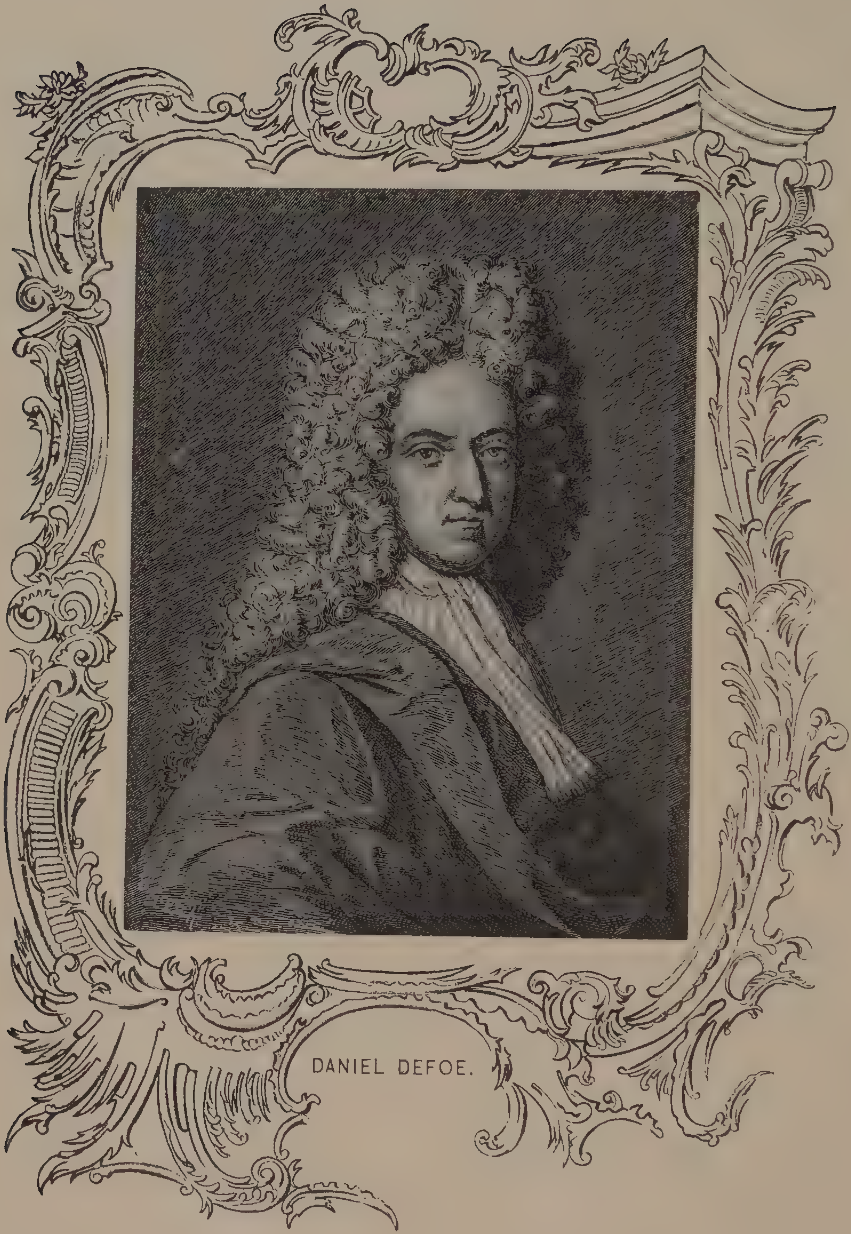
I do not know whether you have much feeling. If you have, you fight it as a weakness. You permit yourself only that which seems virtuous. You are a philosopher; you have no vanity, although you have a great deal of self-love. But your self-love does not blind you; it rather makes you exaggerate your faults than conceal them. You never extol yourself except when you are forced to do so by comparing yourself with other men. You possess discernment, very delicate tact, very correct taste; your tone is excellent.

You would have been the best possible companion in past centuries; you are in this, and you would be in those to come. Englishman as you are, your manners belong to all countries.

You have an unpardonable weakness to which you sacrifice your feelings and submit your conduct — the fear of ridicule. It makes you dependent upon the opinion of fools; and your friends are not safe from the impressions against them which fools choose to give you.

Your judgment is easily confused. You are aware of this weakness, which you control by the firmness with which you pursue your resolutions. Your opposition to any deviation is sometimes pushed too far, and exercised in matters not worth the trouble.

Your instincts are noble and generous. You do good for the pleasure of doing it, without ostentation, without claiming gratitude; in short, your spirit is beautiful and high.



DANIEL DEFOE.

DANIEL DEFOE

(1660?–1731)

BY CHARLES FREDERICK JOHNSON

Daniel Defoe, one of the most vigorous and voluminous writers of the last decade of the seventeenth and the first quarter of the eighteenth centuries, was born in St. Giles parish, Cripplegate, in 1660 or 1661, and died near London in 1731. His father was a butcher named Foe, and the evolution of the son's name through the various forms of D. Foe, De Foe, Defoe, to Daniel Defoe, the present accepted form, did not begin much before he reached the age of forty. He was educated at the «dissenting school» of a Mr. Martin in Newington Green, and was intended for the Presbyterian ministry. Although the training at this school was not inferior to that to be obtained at the universities,—and indeed superior in one respect, since all the exercises were in English,—the fact that he had never been «in residence» set Defoe a little apart from the literary society of the day. Swift; Pope, Addison, Arbuthnot, and the rest, considered him untrained and uncultured, and habitually spoke of him with the contempt which the regular feels for the volunteer. Swift referred to him as «an illiterate fellow whose name I forget,» and Pope actually inserted his name in the ‹Dunciad›:—

> «Earless on high stood unabashed De Foe.»

This line is false in two ways, for Defoe's ears were not clipped, though he was condemned to stand in the pillory; and there can hardly be a greater incongruity conceived than there is between our idea of a dunce and the energetic, shifty, wide-awake Defoe,—though for that matter a scholar like Bentley and a wit like Colley Cibber are as much out of place in the poet's ill-natured catalogue. Defoe angrily resented the taunts of the university men and their professional assumption of superiority, and answered Swift that «he had been in his time master of five languages and had not lost them yet,» and challenged John Tutchin to «translate with him any Latin, French, or Italian author, and then retranslate them crosswise, for twenty pounds each book.»

Notwithstanding the great activity of Defoe's pen (over two hundred pamphlets and books, most of them of considerable length, are known to be his; and it is more than probable that much of his work was anonymous and has perished, or could be only partly disinterred by laborious conjecture) he found time to engage twice in business, once as a factor in hosiery and once as a maker of tiles. In each venture he seems to have been unfortunate, and his business experience is alluded to here only because his practical knowledge of mercantile matters is evident in all his work. Even his pirates like Captain Bob Singleton, and adventurers like Colonel Jack, have a decided commercial flavor. They keep a weather eye on the profit-and-loss account, and retire like thrifty traders on a well-earned competency. It is worth mentioning, however, to Defoe's credit, that in one or two instances at least he paid his debts in full, after compromising with his creditors.

Defoe's writings, though all marked by his strong but limited personality, fall naturally into three classes:—

First, his political writings, in which may be included his wretched attempts at political satire, and most of his journalistic work. This is included in numberless pamphlets, broad-sheets, newspapers, and the like, and is admirable expository matter on the public questions of the day. Second, his fiction, ‹Robinson Crusoe,› ‹Captain Singleton,› ‹Colonel Jack,› ‹Roxana,› and ‹Moll Flanders.› Third, his miscellaneous work; innumerable biographies and papers like the ‹History of the Plague,› the ‹Account of the Great Storm,› ‹The True Relation of the Apparition of One Mrs. Veal,› etc. Between the last two classes there is a close connection, since both were written for the market; and his fictions proper are cast in the autobiographical form and are founded on incidents in the lives of real persons, and his biographies contain a large proportion of fiction.

Some knowledge of Defoe's political work is necessary to a comprehension of the early eighteenth century. During his life the power of the people and of the House of Commons was slowly extended, and the foundations of the modern English Constitution were laid. The trading and manufacturing classes, especially in the city of London, increased in wealth and political consequence. The reading public on which a popular writer could rely, widened. With these changes—partly as cause and purely as consequence—came the establishment of «News Journals» and «Reviews.» Besides Addison's Spectator for the more cultured classes, multitudes of periodicals were founded which aimed to reach a more general public. The old method of a broad-sheet or the pamphlet, hawked in the streets or exposed for sale and cried at the book-stalls, was still in use, but the regular issue of a news-letter was taking its place. Defoe attacked the public in both ways with unwearied assiduity. His poem ‹The True-Born Englishman› was sold in the streets to the astonishing number of eighty thousand. In 1704 he established the Review, a bi-weekly. It ran to 1713, and Defoe wrote nearly all of each number. Afterwards he was for eight years main contributor and substantially manager of Mist's Journal, a Tory organ; and one of the most serious and well-founded charges against this first great journalist is, that he was deficient in journalistic honor, and remained in the pay of the Whig Ministry while attached to the Opposition organ. During this period he founded and conducted several other journals.

Defoe possessed in a large measure the journalistic sense. No one ever had a finer instinct in the subtle arts of «working the public» and of advertising. When the notorious Jack Sheppard was condemned, he visited him at Newgate, wrote his life, and had the highwayman, standing under the gallows, send for a copy and deliver it as his «last speech and dying confession.» There is a certain breadth and originality in this stroke, hardly to be paralleled in modern journalism. Defoe had the knack of singling out from the mass of passing events whatever would be likely to interest the public. He brought out an account in some newspaper, and if successful, made the occurrence the subject of a longer article in pamphlet or book form. He was always on the lookout for matter, which he utilized with a pen of marvelous rapidity. The gazette or embryonic newspaper was at first confined to a rehearsal of news. Defoe invented the leading article or «news-letter» of weekly comment, and the society column of Mercure Scandaleuse.

The list of Defoe's political pamphlets is a large one, but they are of more interest to the historian than to the general reader. While they are far inferior in construction and victorious good sense to Sydney Smith's magazine articles on kindred topics, and to Swift's ‹Drapier's Letters› in subtle appeals to the prejudices of the ignorant, they show a remarkable command over the method of reaching the plain people,— to use President Lincoln's phrase, and taking it to mean that great body of quiet persons who desire on the whole to be fair in their judgments, but who must have their duty made quite evident before they see it. Defoe is never vituperative—that is, vituperative for a time when Pope and Swift and Dennis made their personal invective so much higher flavored than modern taste endures. He seems to have been tolerant by nature; and although this proceeds in his case from the fact that his moral enthusiasm was never very warm, and not from any innate refinement of nature, he is entitled to the credit of moderation in the use of abusive language. He is tolerant, too, of those who differ from him in politics and religion; and though it is absurd to suppose, as some of his biographers have done, that he was so far in advance of his century as to have advocated the political soundness of free trade, he shows in his treatment of commercial questions the marks of a broad and comprehensive mind. He speaks of foreigners in a cosmopolitan spirit, with the exception of the Portuguese, for whom he seems to feel a lively dislike, founded possibly on some of his early business experiences. The reader will remember the dignified and courteous demeanor of the Spaniards in ‘Robinson Crusoe’; and although the violent antipathy of the previous generation to Spanish Romanists had abated, Defoe's freedom from insular prejudice is noteworthy, the more so that a «discreet and sober bearing,» such as he gives his Spaniards, seems to have been his ideal of conduct. Defoe is a great journalist, and although he is a typical hack, writing timely articles for pay, he has a touch of genius. He was always successful in gaining the ear of his public; and in the one instance where he hit upon a subject of universal interest, the life of the solitary castaway thrown absolutely on his own resources, he wrote a book, without any effort or departure from his usual style, which has been as popular with succeeding generations as it was with his own. It is a mistake to call ‘Robinson Crusoe’ a «great boy's book,»—unless we regard the boy nature as persistent in all men, and perhaps it is in all healthy men,—for it treats the unaided conflict with nature and circumstance, which is the essence of adult life, with unequaled simplicity and force. Crusoe is not merely an adventurer; he is the human will, courage, resolution, stripped of all the adventitious support of society. He has the elements of universal humanity, though in detail he is as distinctly English as Odysseus is Greek.

The characters of Defoe's other novels—Colonel Jack, Captain Singleton, Moll Flanders, and Roxana—are so repulsive, and so entirely unaware of their repulsiveness, that we can take little interest in them. Possibly an exception might be made in favor of Colonel Jack, who evinces at times an amusing humor. All are criminals, and the conflict of the criminal with the forces of society may be the subject of the most powerful fiction. But these books are inartistic in several regards. No criminals, even allowing them to be hypocrites, ever disclose themselves in the open-hearted manner of these autobiographers. Vice always pays to virtue the homage of a certain reticence in details. Despite all his Newgate experiences and his acquaintance with noted felons, Defoe never understood either the weakness or the strength of the criminal type. So all his harlots and thieves and outcasts are decidedly amateurish. A serious transgression of the moral law is to them a very slight matter, to be soon forgotten after a temporary fit of repentance, and a long course of evil living in no wise interferes with a comfortable and respectable old age. His pirates have none of the desperation and brutal heroism of sin. Stevenson's John Silver or Israel Hands is worth a schooner-load of them. Neither they nor their author seem to value virtue very highly, though they are acutely sensitive to the discomfort of an evil reputation. Possibly such people may be true to a certain type of humanity, but they are exceedingly uninteresting. A writer who takes so narrow a view cannot produce a great book, even though his lack of moral scope and insight is partly compensated by a vivid presentation of life on the low plane from which he views it.

'Moll Flanders' and 'Roxana' are very coarse books, but it can hardly be said that they are harmful or corrupting. They are simply vulgar. Vice has preserved all its evil by preserving all its grossness. Passion is reduced to mere animalism, and is depicted with the brutal directness of Hogarth. This may be good morals, but it is unpleasant art. It is true that Defoe's test of a writer was that he should "please and serve his public," and in providing amusement he was not more refined nor more coarse than those whom he addressed; but a writer should look a little deeper and aim a little higher than the average morality of his day. Otherwise he may please but will not serve his generation, in any true sense of literary service.

Defoe is sometimes spoken of as the first great realist. In a limited sense this may be true. No doubt he presents the surface of a limited area of the eighteenth-century world with fidelity. With the final establishment of Protestantism, the increase of trade, and the building of physical science on the broad foundations laid down by Newton, England had become more mundane than at any other period. The intense faith and the imaginative quality of the seventeenth century were deadened. The eighteenth century kept its eyes on the earth, and though it found a great many interesting and wonderful things there, and though it laid the foundations of England's industrial greatness, it was neither a spiritual nor an artistic age. The novel was in its infancy; and as if a "true story" was more worthy of respect than an invention, it received from Defoe an air of verisimilitude and is usually based on some real events. He is careful to embellish his fictions with little bits of realism. Thus, Moll Flanders gives an inventory of the goods she took to America, and in the 'History of the Plague' Defoe adds a note to his description of a burial-ground:—"N. B. The author of this Journal lies buried in that very ground, being at his own desire, his sister having been buried there a few weeks before." This enumeration of particulars certainly gives an air of reality, but it is a trick easily caught, and it is only now and then that he hits—as in the above instance—on the characteristic circumstance which gives life and reality to the narrative. Except in 'Robinson Crusoe,' much of his detail is irrelevant and tiresome. But all the events on the lonely island are admirably harmonized and have a cumulative effect. The second part,—after the rescue,—written to take advantage of the popularity of the first, is vastly inferior. The artistic selective power is not exercised. This same concrete imagination which sees minute details is also evident in his contemporary Swift, but with him it works at the bidding of a far more fervid and emotional spirit.

Defoe is a pioneer in novel-writing and in journalism, and in both he shows wonderful readiness in appreciating what the public would like and energy in supplying them with it. To the inventor or discoverer of a new form we cannot deny great credit. Most writers imitate, but it cannot be said that Defoe founded himself on any predecessor, while his successors are numbered by hundreds. A certain relationship could be traced between his work, and the picaresque tales of France and Spain on the one hand and the contemporary journals of actual adventure on the other; but not one close enough to detract from his claim to original power.

Some of Defoe's political work, like 'The True-Born Englishman,' 'The Shortest Way with Dissenters,' 'Reasons against the Succession of the House of Hanover,' are written in the ironical tone. Mr. Saintsbury seems to think that Defoe's method is not truly ironical, because it differs from Swift's; but if we remember that one writer differeth from another in irony, there is no reason to deny Defoe's mastery of this penetrating weapon, especially when we find that he imposed on both parties. The judges told him that «irony of that sort would bring him to the gallows,» but the eighteenth-century law of libel was more rigid in its constructions than the canons of literary art.

Defoe made several attempts at poetical satire, which are sufficient to show that he lacked either the talent or the patience to write political verse. Compared with Dryden's or Pope's, his work is mere doggerel, enlivened by occasional vigorous couplets like—

«Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The devil always builds a chapel there:
And 'twill be found upon examination
The latter has the largest congregation.»

Or

«No panegyric needs their praise record—
An Englishman ne'er wants his own good word.»

But an examination will confirm the impression that Defoe was not a poet, as surely as the re-reading of 'Robinson Crusoe' will strengthen our hereditary belief that he was a great writer of prose.

Charles F. Johnson

FROM ‹ROBINSON CRUSOE›

CRUSOE'S SHIPWRECK

NOTHING can describe the confusion of thought which I felt when I sunk into the water; for though I swam very well, yet I could not deliver myself from the waves so as to draw my breath; till that wave having driven me or rather carried me a vast way on towards the shore, and having spent itself, went back, and left me upon the land almost dry, but half dead with the water I took in. I had so much presence of mind as well as breath left, that seeing myself nearer the mainland than I expected, I got upon my feet, and endeavored to make on towards the land as fast as I could, before another wave should return and take me up again; but I soon found it was impossible to avoid it; for I saw the sea coming after me as high as a great hill, and as furious as an enemy which I had no means or strength to contend with: my business was to hold my breath, and raise myself upon the water, if I could; and so by swimming to preserve my breathing, and pilot myself towards the shore if possible; my greatest concern now being that the wave, as it would carry me a great way towards the shore when it came on, might not carry me back again with it when it gave back towards the sea.

The wave that came upon me again, buried me at once twenty or thirty feet deep in its own body; and I could feel myself carried with a mighty force and swiftness towards the shore, a very great way; but I held my breath, and assisted myself to swim still forward with all my might. I was ready to burst with holding my breath, when, as I felt myself rising up, so to my immediate relief I found my head and hands shoot out above the surface of the water; and though it was not two seconds of time that I could keep myself so, yet it relieved me greatly, gave me breath and new courage. I was covered again with water a good while, but not so long but I held it out; and finding the water had spent itself, and began to return, I struck forward against the return of the waves, and felt ground again with my feet. I stood still a few moments to recover breath, and till the water went from me, and then took to my heels and ran with what strength I had farther towards the shore.

But neither would this deliver me from the fury of the sea, which came pouring in after me again; and twice more I was lifted up by the waves and carried forward as before, the shore being very flat.

The last time of these two had well-nigh been fatal to me; for the sea having hurried me along as before, landed me, or rather dashed me, against a piece of rock, and that with such force that it left me senseless, and indeed helpless as to my own deliverance; for the blow taking my side and breast, beat the breath as it were quite out of my body, and had it returned again immediately I must have been strangled in the water; but I recovered a little before the return of the waves, and seeing I should again be covered with the water, I resolved to hold fast by a piece of the rock, and so to hold my breath if possible till the wave went back. Now, as the waves were not so high as the first, being nearer land, I held my hold till the wave abated, and then fetched another run, which brought me so near the shore, that the next wave, though it went over me, yet did not so swallow me up as to carry me away; and the next run I took, I got to the mainland, where to my great comfort I clambered up the cliffs of the shore, and sat me down upon the grass, free from danger and quite out of the reach of the water.

I was now landed, and safe on shore; and began to look up and thank God that my life was saved, in a case wherein there were, some minutes before, scarce any room to hope. I believe it is impossible to express, to the life, what the ecstasies and transports of the soul are when it is so saved, as I may say, out of the grave: and I did not wonder now at the custom, viz., that when a malefactor who has the halter about his neck is tied up, and just going to be turned off, and has a reprieve brought to him,—I say I do not wonder that they bring a surgeon with it, to let him blood that very moment they tell him of it; that the surprise may not drive the animal spirits from the heart and overwhelm him.

> « For sudden joys, like griefs, confound at first.»

I walked about the shore, lifting up my hands, and my whole being, as I may say, wrapped up in the contemplation of my deliverance; making a thousand gestures and motions which I cannot describe; reflecting upon my comrades that were drowned, and that there should not be one soul saved but myself; for as for them, I never saw them afterwards, or any sign of them, except three of the hats, one cap, and two shoes that were not fellows.

I cast my eyes to the stranded vessel — when the breach and froth of the sea being so big I could hardly see it, it lay so far off — and considered, Lord! how was it possible I could get on shore?

Crusoe Makes a New Home

I soon found the place I was in was not for my settlement, particularly because it was upon a low moorish ground, near the sea, and I believed it would not be wholesome; and more particularly because there was no fresh water near it; so I resolved to find a more healthy and more convenient spot of ground.

I consulted several things in my situation which I found would be proper for me: first, air and fresh water, I just now mentioned; secondly, shelter from the heat of the sun; thirdly, security from ravenous creatures, whether men or beasts; fourthly, a view to the sea, that if God sent any ship in sight, I might not lose any advantage for my deliverance, of which I was not willing to banish all my expectation yet.

I searched for a place proper for this. I found a little plain on the side of a rising hill, whose front towards this little plain was steep as a house-side, so that nothing could come down upon me from the top. On the side of this rock there was a hollow place, worn a little way in, like the entrance or door of a cave; but there was not really any cave, or way into the rock at all.

On the flat of the green, just before this hollow place, I resolved to pitch my tent. This plain was not above a hundred yards broad, and about twice as long, and lay like a green before my door; and at the end of it descended irregularly every way down into the low ground by the seaside. It was on the N. N. W. side of the hill, so that it was sheltered from the heat every day, till it came to a W. and by S. sun, or thereabouts, which in those countries is near the setting.

Before I set up my tent I drew a half-circle before the hollow place, which took in about ten yards in its semi-diameter from the rock, and twenty yards in its diameter from its beginning and ending.

In this half-circle I pitched two rows of long stakes, driving them into the ground till they stood very firm like piles, the biggest end being out of the ground about five feet and a half, and sharpened on the top. The two rows did not stand above six inches from one another.

Then I took the pieces of cable which I cut in the ship, and laid them in rows, one upon another, within the circle between these two rows of stakes, up to the top, placing other stakes in the inside, leaning against them, about two feet and a half high, like a spur to a post: and this fence was so strong that neither man nor beast could get into it or over it. This cost me a great deal of time and labor, especially to cut the piles in the woods, bring them to the place, and drive them into the earth.

The entrance into this place I made to be not by a door, but by a short ladder to go over the top; which ladder, when I was in, I lifted over after me; and so I was completely fenced in and fortified, as I thought, from all the world, and consequently slept secure in the night, which otherwise I could not have done; though as it appeared afterwards, there was no need of all this caution against the enemies that I apprehended danger from.

A Footprint

It happened one day about noon, going toward my boat, I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man's naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen on the sand. I stood like one thunderstruck, or as if I had seen an apparition. I listened, I looked about me, but I could hear nothing or see anything; I went up to a rising ground to look farther; I went up the shore and down the shore, but it was all one: I could see no other impression but that one. I went to it again to see if there were any more, and to observe if it might not be my fancy; but there was no room for that, for there was exactly the print of a foot — toes, heel, and every part of a foot. How it came hither I knew not, nor could I in the least imagine; but after innumerable fluttering thoughts, like a man perfectly confused and out of myself, I came home to my fortification, not feeling, as we say, the ground I went on, but terrified to the last degree, looking behind me at every two or three steps, mistaking every bush and tree, and fancying every stump at a distance to be a man. Nor is it possible to describe how many various shapes my affrighted imagination represented things to me in, how many wild ideas were found every moment in my fancy, and what strange unaccountable whimseys came into my thoughts by the way. When I came to my castle (for so I think I called it ever after this) I fled into it like one pursued. Whether I went over by the ladder, as first contrived, or went in at the hole in the rock, which I had called a door, I cannot remember; no, nor could I remember the next morning, for never frightened hare fled to cover or fox to earth with more terror of mind than I to this retreat.

FROM ‹HISTORY OF THE PLAGUE IN LONDON›

SUPERSTITIOUS FEARS OF THE PEOPLE

But I must go back again to the beginning of this surprising time; while the fears of the people were young, they were increased strangely by several odd incidents, which put altogether, it was really a wonder the whole body of the people did not rise as one man and abandon their dwellings, leaving the place as a space of ground designed by heaven for an Akeldama doomed to be destroyed from the face of the earth, and that all that would be found in it would perish with it. I shall name but a few of these things; but sure they were so many, and so many wizards and cunning people propagating them, that I have often wondered there was any (women especially) left behind.

In the first place, a blazing star or comet appeared for several months before the plague, as there did the year after, another, a little before the fire; the old women, and the phlegmatic hypochondriac part of the other sex, whom I could almost call the old women too, remarked, especially afterward, though not till both those judgments were over, that those two comets passed directly over the city, and that so very near the houses that it was plain they imported something peculiar to the city alone. That the comet before the pestilence was of a faint, dull, languid color, and its motion very heavy, solemn, and slow; but that the comet before the fire was bright and sparkling, or as others said, flaming, and its motion swift and furious; and that accordingly one foretold a heavy judgment, slow but severe, terrible, and frightful, as was the plague. But the other foretold a stroke, sudden, swift, and fiery, as was the conflagration; nay, so particular some people were, that as they looked upon that comet preceding the fire they fancied that they not only saw it pass swiftly and fiercely, and could perceive the motion with their eye, but they even heard it,—that it made a rushing mighty noise, fierce and terrible, though at a distance and but just perceivable.

I saw both these stars, and I must confess, had had so much of the common notion of such things in my head that I was apt to look upon them as the forerunners and warnings of God's judgments; and especially when the plague had followed the first, I saw yet another of the like kind, I could not but say, God had not yet sufficiently scourged the city.

The apprehensions of the people were likewise strangely increased by the error of the times, in which I think the people, from what principle I cannot imagine, were more addicted to prophecies and astrological conjurations, dreams, and old wives' tales, than ever they were before or since: whether this unhappy temper was originally raised by the follies of some people who got money by it,—that is to say, by printing predictions and prognostications,—I know not; but certain it is, books frighted them terribly; such as 'Lily's Almanack,' 'Gadbury's Astrological Predictions,' 'Poor Robin's Almanack,' and the like; also several pretended religious books, one entitled, 'Come out of Her, my People, lest Ye be Partakers of her Plagues'; another called 'Fair Warning'; another, 'Britain's Remembrancer'; and many such, all or most part of which foretold, directly or covertly, the ruin of the city; nay, some were so enthusiastically bold as to run about the streets with their oral predictions, pretending they were sent to preach to the city; and one in particular, who like Jonah to Nineveh, cried in the streets, «Yet forty days, and London shall be destroyed.» I will not be positive whether he said forty days or yet a few days. Another ran about naked, except a pair of drawers about his waist, crying day and night, like a man that Josephus mentions, who cried, «Woe to Jerusalem!» a little before the destruction of that city; so this poor naked creature cried, «Oh! the great and the dreadful God!» and said no more, but repeated those words continually, with a voice and countenance full of horror, a swift pace; and nobody could ever find him to stop, or rest, or take any sustenance, at least that ever I could hear of. I met this poor creature several times in the streets, and would have spoken to him, but he would not enter into speech with me or any one else, but kept on his dismal cries continually.

These things terrified the people to the last degree; and especially when two or three times, as I have mentioned already, they found one or two in the hills, dead of the plague at St. Giles's.

Next to these public things were the dreams of old women; or I should say, the interpretation of old women upon other people's dreams; and these put abundance of people even out of their wits. Some heard voices warning them to be gone, for that there would be such a plague in London, so that the living would not be able to bury the dead; others saw apparitions in the air; and I must be allowed to say of both, I hope without breach of charity, that they heard voices that never spake, and saw sights that never appeared; but the imagination of the people was really turned wayward and possessed; and no wonder if they who were poring continually at the clouds saw shapes and figures, representations and appearances, which had nothing in them but air and vapor. Here they told us they saw a flaming sword held in a hand, coming out of a cloud, with a point hanging directly over the city. There they saw hearses and coffins in the air carrying to be buried. And there again, heaps of dead bodies lying unburied and the like; just as the imagination of the poor terrified people furnished them with matter to work upon.

"So hypochondriac fancies represent
Ships, armies, battles in the firmament;
Till steady eyes the exhalations solve,
And all to its first matter, cloud, resolve."

I could fill this account with the strange relations such people give every day of what they have seen; and every one was so positive of their having seen what they pretended to see, that there was no contradicting them without breach of friendship, or being accounted rude and unmannerly on the one hand and profane and impenetrable on the other. One time before the plague was begun, otherwise than as I have said in St. Giles's,—I think it was in March,—seeing a crowd of people in the street I joined with them to satisfy my curiosity, and found them all staring up into the air to see what a woman told them appeared plain to her, which was an angel clothed in white, with a fiery sword in his hand, waving it or brandishing it over his head. She described every part of the figure to the life, showed them the motion and the form, and the poor people came into it so eagerly and with so much readiness: «Yes! I see it all plainly," says one, «there's the sword as plain as can be;» another saw the angel; one saw his very face, and cried out what a glorious creature he was! One saw one thing, and one another. I looked as earnestly as the rest, but perhaps not with so much willingness to be imposed upon; and I said indeed that I could see nothing but a white cloud, bright on one side by the shining of the sun upon the other part. The woman endeavored to show it me, but could not make me confess that I saw it, which indeed if I had, I must have lied; but the woman turning to me looked me in the face and fancied I laughed, in which her imagination deceived her too, for I really did not laugh, but was seriously reflecting how the poor people were terrified by the force of their own imagination. However, she turned to me, called me a profane fellow and a scoffer, told me that it was a time of God's anger, and dreadful judgments were approaching, and that despisers such as I should wander and perish.

The people about her seemed disgusted as well as she, and I found there was no persuading them that I did not laugh at them, and that I should be rather mobbed by them than be able to undeceive them. So I left them, and this appearance passed for as real as the blazing star itself.

Another encounter I had in the open day also; and this was in going through a narrow passage from Petty France into Bishopsgate Churchyard, by a row of almshouses. There are two churchyards to Bishopsgate Church or parish; one we go over to pass from the place called Petty France into Bishopsgate Street, coming out just by the church door; the other is on the side of the narrow passage where the almshouses are on the left, and a dwarf wall with a palisade on it on the right hand, and the city wall on the other side more to the right.

In this narrow passage stands a man looking through the palisades into the burying-place, and as many people as the narrowness of the place would admit to stop without hindering the passage of others; and he was talking mighty eagerly to them, and pointing now to one place, then to another, and affirming that he saw a ghost walking upon such a gravestone there: he described the shape, the posture, and the movement of it so exactly, that it was the greatest amazement to him in the world that everybody did not see it as well as he. On a sudden he would cry, « There it is! Now it comes this way! » then, « 'Tis turned back! » till at length he persuaded the people into so firm a belief of it, that one fancied he saw it; and thus he came every day making a strange hubbub, considering it was so narrow a passage, till Bishopsgate clock struck eleven, and then the ghost would seem to start, and as if he were called away, disappear on a sudden.

I looked earnestly every way and at the very moment that this man directed, but could not see the least appearance of anything; but so positive was this poor man that he gave them vapors in abundance, and sent them away trembling and frightened, till at length few people that knew of it cared to go through that passage, and hardly anybody by night on any account whatever.

This ghost, as the poor man affirmed, made signs to the houses, and to the ground, and to the people, plainly intimating, or else they so understanding it, that abundance of people should come to be buried in that churchyard, as indeed happened; but that he saw such aspects, I must acknowledge I never believed, nor could I see anything of it myself, though I looked most earnestly to see it if possible.

How Quacks and Impositors Preyed on the Fears of the People

I cannot omit a subtlety of one of those quack operators, with which he gulled the poor people to crowd about him, but did nothing for them without money. He had, it seems, added to his bills which he gave out in the streets, this advertisement in capital letters; viz., « He gives advice to the poor for nothing.»

Abundance of people came to him accordingly, to whom he made a great many fine speeches, examined them of the state of their health and of the constitution of their bodies, and told them many good things to do which were of no great moment; but the issue and conclusion of all was, that he had a preparation which, if they took such a quantity of every morning, he would pawn his life that they should never have the plague,—no, though they lived in the house with people that were infected. This made the people all resolve to have it; but then the price of that was so much,—I think it was half a crown. « But, sir,» says one poor woman, « I am a poor almswoman, and am kept by the parish, and your bills say you give the poor your help for nothing.» «Ay, good woman,» says the doctor, «so I do, as I published there; I give my advice, but not my physic!» «Alas, sir,» says she, «that is a snare laid for the poor then, for you give them your advice for nothing: that is to say, you advise them gratis, to buy your physic for their money; so does every shopkeeper with his wares.» Here the woman began to give him ill words, and stood at his door all that day, telling her tale to all the people that came, till the doctor, finding she turned away his customers, was obliged to call her up-stairs again and give her his box of physic for nothing, which perhaps too was good for nothing when she had it.

The People Are Quarantined in Their Houses

This shutting up of houses was at first counted a very cruel and unchristian method, and the poor people so confined made bitter lamentations; complaints of the severity of it were also daily brought to my lord mayor, of houses causelessly and some maliciously shut up; I cannot say, but upon inquiry, many that complained so loudly were found in a condition to be continued; and others again, inspection being made upon the sick person and the sickness not appearing infectious, or if uncertain, yet on his being content to be carried to the pest-house, was released.

As I went along Houndsditch one morning about eight o'clock there was a great noise; it is true indeed that there was not much crowd, because the people were not very free to gather together, or to stay together when they were there, nor did I stay long there; but the outcry was loud enough to prompt my curiosity, and I called to one who looked out of a window, and asked what was the matter.

A watchman, it seems, had been employed to keep his post at the door of a house which was infected, or said to be infected, and was shut up; he had been there all night for two nights together, as he told his story, and the day watchman had been there one day, and was now come to relieve him; all this while no noise had been heard in the house, no light had been seen, they called for nothing, sent him on no errands, which used to be the chief business of the watchman, neither had they given him any disturbance, as he said, from Monday afternoon, when he heard a great crying and screaming in the house, which as he supposed was occasioned by some of the family dying just at that time. It seems the night before, the dead-cart, as it was called, had been stopt there, and a servant-maid had been brought down to the door dead, and the buriers or bearers, as they were called, put her into the cart, wrapped only in a green rug, and carried her away.

The watchman had knocked at the door, it seems, when he heard that noise and crying as above, and nobody answered a great while; but at last one looked out and said with an angry quick tone, and yet a kind of crying voice, or a voice of one that was crying, «What d'ye want, that you make such a knocking?» He answered, «I am the watchman; how do you do? What is the matter?» The person answered, «What is that to you? Stop the dead-cart.» This, it seems, was about one o'clock; soon after, as the fellow said, he stopped the dead-cart, and then knocked again, but nobody answered; he continued knocking, and the bellman called out several times, «Bring out your dead;» but nobody answered, till the man that drove the cart, being called to other houses, would stay no longer, and drove away.

The watchman knew not what to make of all this, so he let them alone till the morning man, or day watchman, as they called him, came to relieve him. Giving him an account of the particulars, they knocked at the door a great while, but nobody answered, and they observed that the window or casement at which the person looked out who had answered before, continued open, being up two pair of stairs.

Upon this the two men, to satisfy their curiosity, got a long ladder, and one of them went up to the window and looked into the room, where he saw a woman lying dead upon the floor in a dismal manner, having no clothes on her but her shift; but though he called aloud, and putting in his long staff, knocked hard on the floor, yet nobody stirred or answered; neither could he hear any noise in the house.

He came down upon this, and acquainted his fellow, who went up also, and finding it just so, they resolved to acquaint either the lord mayor or some other magistrate of it, but did not offer to go in at the window. The magistrate, it seems, upon the information of the two men ordered the house to be broken open, a constable and other persons being appointed to be present, that nothing might be plundered; and accordingly it was so done, when nobody was found in the house but that young woman, who having been infected and past recovery, the rest had left her to die by herself, and every one gone, having found some way to delude the watchman and to get open the door, or get out at some back door, or over the tops of the houses, so that he knew nothing of it; and as to those cries and shrieks which he heard, it was supposed they were the passionate cries of the family at this bitter parting, which to be sure it was to them all, this being the sister to the mistress of the family. The man of the house, his wife, several children and servants, being all gone and fled; whether sick or sound, that I could never learn, nor indeed did I make much inquiry after it.

MORAL EFFECTS OF THE PLAGUE

Here we may observe, and I hope it will not be amiss to take notice of it, that a near view of death would soon reconcile men of good principles one to another, and that it is chiefly owing to our easy situation in life, and our putting these things far from us, that our breaches are fomented, ill blood continued, prejudices, breach of charity and of Christian union so much kept and so far carried on among us as it is: another plague year would reconcile all these differences; a close conversing with death or with diseases that threaten death would scum off the gall from our tempers, remove the animosities among us, and bring us to see with differing eyes than those which we looked on things before; as the people who had been used to join with the church were reconciled at this time with the admitting the Dissenters, who with an uncommon prejudice had broken off from the communion of the Church of England, were now content to come to their parish churches, and to conform to the worship which they did not approve of before; but as the terror of the infection abated, those things all returned again to their less desirable channel, and to the course they were in before.

I mention this but historically. I have no mind to enter into arguments to move either or both sides to a more charitable compliance one with another; I do not see that it is probable such a discourse would be either suitable or successful; the breaches seem rather to widen, and tend to a widening farther than to closing; and who am I that I should think myself able to influence either one side or the other? But this I may repeat again, that it is evident death will reconcile us all—on the other side the grave we shall be all brethren again; in heaven, whither

I hope we may come from all parties and persuasions, we shall find neither prejudice nor scruple; there we shall be of one principle and of one opinion. Why we cannot be content to go hand in hand to the place where we shall join heart and hand, without the least hesitation and with the most complete harmony and affection; I say, why we cannot do so here, I can say nothing to, neither shall I say anything more of it but that it remains to be lamented.

TERRIBLE SCENES IN THE STREETS

This [38,195 deaths in about a month] was a prodigious number of itself; but if I should add the reasons which I have to believe that this account was deficient, and how deficient it was, you would with me make no scruple to believe that there died above 10,000 a week for all those weeks, and a proportion for several weeks both before and after. The confusion among the people, especially within the city, at that time was inexpressible; the terror was so great at last that the courage of the people appointed to carry away the dead began to fail them; nay, several of them died, although they had the distemper before, and were recovered; and some of them dropped down when they had been carrying the bodies even at the pitside, and just ready to throw them in; and this confusion was greater in the city, because they had flattered themselves with hopes of escaping, and thought the bitterness of death was past. One cart, they told us, going up to Shoreditch, was forsaken by the drivers, or being left to one man to drive, he died in the street; and the horses, going on, overthrew the cart and left the bodies, some thrown here, some there, in a dismal manner. Another cart was, it seems, found in the great pit in Finsbury Fields, the driver being dead, or having been gone and abandoned it; and the horses running too near it, the cart fell in and drew the horses in also. It was suggested that the driver was thrown in with it and that the cart fell upon him, by reason his whip was seen to be in the pit among the bodies; but that, I suppose, could not be certain.

In our parish of Aldgate the dead-carts were several times, as I have heard, found standing at the churchyard gate, full of dead bodies; but neither bellman, nor driver, nor any one else with it. Neither in these nor in many other cases did they know what bodies they had in their cart, for sometimes they were let down with ropes out of balconies and out of windows; and sometimes the bearers brought them to the cart, sometimes other people; nor, as the men themselves said, did they trouble themselves to keep any account of the numbers.

The Plague Due to Natural Causes

I would be far from lessening the awe of the judgments of God, and the reverence to his Providence, which ought always to be on our minds on such occasions as these; doubtless the visitation itself is a stroke from heaven upon a city, or country, or nation where it falls, a messenger of his vengeance, and a loud call to that nation, or country, or city, to humiliation and repentance, according to that of the prophet Jeremiah, xviii. 7, 8: "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom to pluck up, and pull down, and destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them." Now to prompt due impressions of the awe of God on the minds of men on such occasions, and not to lessen them, it is that I have left those minutes upon record.

I say, therefore, I reflect upon no man for putting the reason of those things upon the immediate hand of God, and the appointment and direction of his Providence; nay, on the contrary there were many wonderful deliverances of persons when infected, which intimate singular and remarkable Providence in the particular instances to which they refer; and I esteem my own deliverance to be one next to miraculous, and do record it with thankfulness.

But when I am speaking of the plague as a distemper arising from natural causes, we must consider it as it was really propagated by natural means; nor is it at all the less a judgment for its being under the conduct of human causes and effects: for as the Divine power has formed the whole scheme of nature, and maintains nature in its course, so the same power thinks fit to let his own actings with men, whether of mercy or judgment, to go on in the ordinary course of natural causes, and he is pleased to act by those natural causes as the ordinary means; excepting and reserving to himself nevertheless a power to act in a supernatural way when he sees occasion. Now it is evident that in the case of an infection there is no apparent extraordinary occasion for supernatural operation, but the ordinary course of things appears sufficiently armed and made capable of all the effects that heaven usually directs by a contagion. Among these causes and effects, this of the secret conveyance of infection, imperceptible and unavoidable, is more than sufficient to execute the fierceness of Divine vengeance, without putting it upon supernaturals and miracles.

This acute penetrating nature of the disease itself was such, and the infection was received so imperceptibly, that the most exact caution could not secure us while in the place; but I must be allowed to believe,—and I have so many examples fresh in my memory to convince me of it that I think none can resist their evidence,—I say, I must be allowed to believe that no one in this whole nation ever received the sickness or infection but who received it in the ordinary way of infection from somebody, or the clothes, or touch, or stench of somebody that was infected before.

Spread of the Plague through Necessities of the Poor

Before people came to right notions of the infection, and of infecting one another, people were only shy of those that were really sick; a man with a cap upon his head, or with cloths round his neck, which was the case of those that had swellings there,—such was indeed frightful. But when we saw a gentleman dressed, with his band on, and his gloves in his hand, his hat upon his head, and his hair combed, of such we had not the least apprehensions, and people conversed a great while freely, especially with their neighbors and such as they knew. But when the physicians assured us that the danger was as well from the sound,—that is, the seemingly sound,—as the sick, and that those people that thought themselves entirely free were oftentimes the most fatal; and that it came to be generally understood that people were sensible of it, and of the reason of it; then, I say, they began to be jealous of everybody, and a vast number of people locked themselves up so as not to come abroad into any company at all, nor suffer any that had been abroad in promiscuous company to come into their houses or near them; at least not so near them as to be within the reach of their breath or of any smell from them; and when they were obliged to converse at a distance with strangers, they would always have preservatives in their mouths, and about their clothes, to repel and keep off the infection.

It must be acknowledged that when people began to use these cautions, they were less exposed to danger, and the infection did not break into such houses so furiously as it did into others before; and thousands of families were preserved, speaking with due reserve to the direction of divine Providence, by that means.

But it was impossible to beat anything into the heads of the poor; they went on with the usual impetuosity of their tempers, full of outcries and lamentations when taken, but madly careless of themselves, foolhardy and obstinate, while they were well. Where they could get employment, they pushed into any kind of business, the most dangerous and the most liable to infection; and if they were spoken to, their answer would be:—"I must trust in God for that; if I am taken, then I am provided for, and there is an end of me;" and the like. Or thus:—"Why, what must I do? I cannot starve; I had as good have the plague as perish for want; I have no work, what could I do? I must do this or beg." Suppose it was burying the dead, or attending the sick, or watching infected houses, which were all terrible hazards; but their tale was generally the same. It is true, necessity was a justifiable, warrantable plea, and nothing could be better; but their way of talk was much the same where the necessities were not the same. This adventurous conduct of the poor was that which brought the plague among them in a most furious manner; and this, joined to the distress of their circumstances when taken, was the reason why they died so by heaps; for I cannot say I could observe one jot of better husbandry among them,—I mean the laboring poor,—while they were all well and getting money, than there was before, but as lavish, as extravagant, and as thoughtless for to-morrow as ever; so that when they came to be taken sick, they were immediately in the utmost distress, as well for want as for sickness, as well for lack of food as lack of health.

FROM ‹COLONEL JACK›

Colonel Jack and Captain Jack Escape Arrest

We had not parleyed thus long, but though in the dead of the night, came a man to the other inn door—for as I said above, there are two inns at that place—and called for a pot of beer; but the people were all in bed, and would not rise; he asked them if they had seen two fellows come that way upon one horse. The man said he had; that they went by in the afternoon, and asked the way to Cambridge, but did not stop only to drink one mug. «Oh!» says he, «are they gone to Cambridge? Then I'll be with them quickly.» I was awake in a little garret of the next inn, where we lodged; and hearing the fellow call at the door, got up and went to the window, having some uneasiness at every noise I heard; and by that means heard the whole story. Now the case is plain, our hour was not come; our fate had determined other things for us, and we were to be reserved for it. The matter was thus:—When we first came to Bournbridge we called at the first house and asked the way to Cambridge, drank a mug of beer, and went on, and they might see us turn off to go the way they directed; but night coming on, and we being very weary, we thought we should not find the way; and we came back in the dusk of the evening and went into the other house, being the first as we came back, as that where we called before was the first as we went forward.

You may be sure I was alarmed now, as indeed I had reason to be. The Captain was in bed and fast asleep, but I wakened him, and roused him with a noise that frighted him enough. «Rise, Jack,» said I, «we are both ruined; they are come after us hither.» Indeed, I was wrong to terrify him at that rate; for he started and jumped out of bed and ran directly to the window, not knowing where he was, and not quite awake, was just going to jump out of the window, but I laid hold of him. «What are you going to do?» says I. «I won't be taken,» says he; «let me alone; where are they?»

This was all confusion; and he was so out of himself with the fright, and being overcome with sleep, that I had much to do to prevent his jumping out of the window. However, I held him fast and thoroughly wakened him, and then all was well again and he was presently composed.

Then I told him the story, and we sat together upon the bedside, considering what we should do; upon the whole, as the fellow that called was apparently gone to Cambridge, we had nothing to fear, but to be quiet till daybreak, and then to mount and be gone.

Accordingly, as soon as day peeped we were up; and having happily informed ourselves of the road at the other house, and being told that the road to Cambridge turned off on the left hand, and that the road to Newmarket lay straight forward: I say, having learnt this, the Captain told me he would walk away on foot towards Newmarket, and so when I came to go out I should appear as a single traveler; and accordingly he went out immediately, and away he walked, and he traveled so hard that when I came to follow I thought once that he had dropped me, for though I rode hard, I got no sight of him for an hour. At length, having passed the great bank called the Devil's Ditch, I found him and took him up behind me, and we rode double till we came almost to the end of Newmarket town. Just at the hither house in the town stood a horse at a door, just as it was at Puckeridge. «Now,» says Jack, «if the horse was at the other end of the town I would have him, as sure as we had the other at Puckeridge;» but it would not do; so he got down, and walked through the town on the right-hand side of the way.

He had not got half through the town, but the horse, having somehow or other got loose, came trotting gently on by himself, and nobody following him. The Captain, an old soldier at such work, as soon as the horse was got a pretty way before him, and that he saw nobody followed, sets up a run after the horse, and the horse, hearing him follow, ran the faster; then the Captain calls out, «Stop the horse!» and by this time the horse was got almost to the farther end of the town; the people of the house where he stood not missing him all the while.

Upon his calling out «Stop the horse!» the poor people of the town, such as were next at hand, ran from both sides of the way and stopped the horse for him, as readily as could be, and held him for him till he came up; he very gravely comes up to the horse, hits him a blow or two, and calls him «dog» for running away; gives the man twopence that catched him for him, mounts, and away he comes after me.

This was the oddest adventure that could have happened, for the horse stole the Captain, the Captain did not steal the horse.

When he came up to me, «Now, Colonel Jack,» says he, «what do you say to good luck? Would you have had me refuse the horse, when he came so civilly to ask me to ride?»—«No, no,» said I; «you have got this horse by your wit, not by design; and you may go on now, I think; you are in a safer condition than I am, if we are taken.»

COLONEL JACK FINDS CAPTAIN JACK HARD TO MANAGE

We arrived here very easy and safe, and while we were considering of what way we should travel next, we found we were got to a point, and that there was no way now left but that by the Washes into Lincolnshire, and that was represented as very dangerous; so an opportunity offering of a man that was traveling over the fens, we took him for our guide, and went with him to Spalding, and from thence to a town called Deeping, and so to Stamford in Lincolnshire.

This is a large populous town, and it was market day when we came to it; so we put in at a little house at the hither end of the town, and walked into the town. Here it was not possible to restrain my Captain from playing his feats of art, and my heart ached for him; I told him I would not go with him, for he would not promise to leave off, and I was so terribly concerned at the apprehensions of his venturous humor that I would not so much as stir out of my lodging; but it was in vain to persuade him. He went into the market and found a mountebank there, which was what he wanted. How he picked two pockets there in one quarter of an hour, and brought to our quarters a piece of new holland of eight or nine ells, a piece of stuff, and played three or four pranks more in less than two hours; and how afterwards he robbed a doctor of physic, and yet came off clear in them: all this, I say, as above, belongs to his story, not mine.

I scolded heartily at him when he came back, and told him he would certainly ruin himself and me too before he left off, and threatened in so many words that I would leave him and go back, and carry the horse to Puckeridge, where we borrowed it, and so go to London by myself.

He promised amendment, but as we resolved (now we were in the great road) to travel by night, so, it being not yet night, he gives me the slip again; and was not gone half an hour, but he comes back with a gold watch in his hand. «Come,» says he,

« why ain't you ready? I am ready to go as soon as you will: » and with that he pulls out the gold watch. I was amazed at such a thing as that in a country town; but it seems there were prayers at one of the churches in the evening, and he, placing himself as the occasion directed, found the way to be so near a lady as to get it from her side, and walked off with it unperceived.

The same night we went away by moonlight, after having the satisfaction to hear the watch cried, and ten guineas offered for it again; he would have been glad of the ten guineas instead of the watch, but durst not venture to carry it home. « Well,» says I, « you are afraid, and indeed you have reason; give it to me; I will venture to carry it again; » but he would not let me, but told me that when we came into Scotland we might sell anything there without danger; which was true indeed, for there they asked us no questions.

We set out, as I said, in the evening by moonlight, and traveled hard, the road being very plain and large, till we came to Grantham, by which time it was about two in the morning, and all the town as it were dead asleep; so we went on for Newark, where we reached about eight in the morning, and there we lay down and slept most of the day; and by this sleeping so continually in the daytime, I kept him from doing a great deal of mischief which he would otherwise have done.

Colonel Jack's First Wife is not Disposed to be Economical

We soon found a house proper for our dwelling, and so went to housekeeping; we had not been long together but I found that gay temper of my wife returned, and she threw off the mask of her gravity and good conduct that I had so long fancied was her mere natural disposition, and now, having no more occasion for disguises, she resolved to seem nothing but what she really was, a wild untamed colt, perfectly loose, and careless to conceal any part, no, not the worst of her conduct.

She carried on this air of levity to such an excess that I could not but be dissatisfied at the expense of it, for she kept company that I did not like, lived beyond what I could support, and sometimes lost at play more than I cared to pay; upon which one day I took occasion to mention it, but lightly, and said to her by way of raillery that we lived merrily for as long as it would last. She turned short upon me: «What do you mean?» says she; «why, you do not pretend to be uneasy, do ye?» «No, no, madam, not I, by no means; it is no business of mine, you know,» said I, «to inquire what my wife spends, or whether she spends more than I can afford, or less; I only desire the favor to know, as near as you can guess, how long you will please to take to dispatch me, for I would not be too long a-dying.»

«I do not know what you talk of,» says she. «You may die as leisurely or as hastily as you please, when your time comes; I ain't a-going to kill you, as I know of.»

«But you are going to starve me, madam,» said I; «and hunger is as leisurely a death as breaking upon the wheel.»

«I starve you! why, are not you a great Virginia merchant, and did not I bring you £1500? What would you have? Sure, you can maintain a wife out of that, can't you?»

«Yes, madam,» says I, «I could maintain a wife, but not a gamester, though you had brought me £1500 a year; no estate is big enough for a box and dice.»

She took fire at that, and flew out in a passion, and after a great many bitter words told me in short that she saw no occasion to alter her conduct; and as for not maintaining her, when I could not maintain her longer she would find some way or other to maintain herself.

Some time after the first rattle of this kind she vouchsafed to let me know that she was pleased to be with child; I was at first glad of it, in hopes it would help to abate her madness; but it was all one, and her being with child only added to the rest, for she made such preparations for her lying-in, and other appendixes of a child's being born, that in short I found she would be downright distracted; and I took the liberty to tell her one day she would soon bring herself and me to destruction, and entreated her to consider that such figures as those were quite above us and out of our circle; and in short, that I neither could nor would allow such expenses; that at this rate two or three children would effectually ruin me, and that I desired her to consider what she was doing.

She told me with an air of disdain that it was none of her business to consider anything of that matter; that if I could not allow it she would allow it herself, and I might do my worst.

I begged her to consider things for all that, and not drive me to extremities; that I married her to love and cherish her, and use her as a good wife ought to be used, but not to be ruined and undone by her. In a word, nothing could mollify her, nor any argument persuade her to moderation; but withal she took it so heinously that I should pretend to restrain her, that she told me in so many words she would drop her burthen with me, and then if I did not like it she would take care of herself; she would not live with me an hour, for she would not be restrained, not she; and talked a long while at that rate.

I told her, as to her child, which she called her burthen, it should be no burthen to me; as to the rest she might do as she pleased; it might however do me this favor, that I should have no more lyings-in at the rate of £136 at a time, as I found she intended it should be now. She told me she could not tell that; if she had no more by me, she hoped she should by somebody else. "Say you so, madam?" said I; "then they that get them shall keep them." She did not know that neither, she said, and so turned it off jeering, and as it were laughing at me.

This last discourse nettled me, I must confess, and the more because I had a great deal of it and very often; till, in short, we began at length to enter into a friendly treaty about parting.

Nothing could be more criminal than the several discourses we had upon this subject; she demanded a separate maintenance, and in particular, at the rate of £300 a year; and I demanded security of her that she should not run me in debt; she demanding the keeping of the child, with an allowance of £100 a year for that, and I demanding that I should be secured from being charged for keeping any she might have by somebody else, as she had threatened me.

In the interval, and during these contests, she dropped her burthen (as she called it), and brought me a son, a very fine child.

She was content during her lying-in to abate a little, though it was but a very little indeed, of the great expense she had intended; and with some difficulty and persuasion was content with a suit of child-bed linen of £15 instead of one she had intended of threescore; and this she magnified as a particular testimony of her condescension, and a yielding to my avaricious temper, as she called it.

THE DEVIL DOES NOT CONCERN HIMSELF WITH PETTY MATTERS

From ‹The Modern History of the Devil›

NOR will I undertake to tell you, till I have talked farther with him about it, how far the Devil is concerned to discover frauds, detect murders, reveal secrets, and especially to tell where any money is hid, and show folks where to find it; it is an odd thing that Satan should think it of consequence to come and tell us where such a miser hid a strong box, or where such an old woman buried her chamberpot full of money, the value of all which is perhaps but a trifle, when, at the same time he lets so many veins of gold, so many unexhausted mines, nay, mountains of silver (as we may depend on it are hid in the bowels of the earth, and which it would be so much to the good of whole nations to discover), lie still there, and never say one word of them to anybody. Besides, how does the Devil's doing things so foreign to himself, and so out of his way, agree with the rest of his character; namely, showing a friendly disposition to mankind, or doing beneficent things? This is so beneath Satan's quality, and looks so little, that I scarce know what to say to it; but that which is still more pungent in the case is, these things are so out of his road, and so foreign to his calling, that it shocks our faith in them, and seems to clash with all the just notions we have of him and of his business in the world. The like is to be said of those merry little turns we bring him in acting with us and upon us upon trifling and simple occasions, such as tumbling chairs and stools about house, setting pots and kettles bottom upward, tossing the glass and crockery-ware about without breaking, and suchlike mean foolish things, beneath the dignity of the Devil, who in my opinion is rather employed in setting the world with the bottom upward, tumbling kings and crowns about, and dashing the nations one against another; raising tempests and storms, whether at sea or on shore; and in a word, doing capital mischiefs, suitable to his nature and agreeable to his name Devil, and suited to that circumstance of his condition which I have fully represented in the primitive part of his exiled state.

But to bring in the Devil playing at push-pin with the world, or like Domitian, catching flies,—that is to say, doing nothing to the purpose,—this is not only deluding ourselves, but putting a slur upon the Devil himself; and I say, I shall not dishonor Satan so much as to suppose anything in it; however, as I must have a care too how I take away the proper materials of winter-evening frippery, and leave the goodwives nothing of the Devil to frighten the children with, I shall carry the weighty point no farther. No doubt the Devil and Dr. Faustus were very intimate; I should rob you of a very significant proverb if I should so much as doubt it. No doubt the Devil showed himself in the glass to that fair lady who looked in to see where to place her patches; but then it should follow too that the Devil is an enemy to the ladies wearing patches, and that has some difficulties in it which we cannot easily reconcile; but we must tell the story, and leave out the consequences.

DEFOE ADDRESSES HIS PUBLIC

From ‹An Appeal to Honor and Justice›

I HOPE the time has come at last when the voice of moderate principles may be heard. Hitherto the noise has been so great, and the prejudices and passions of men so strong, that it had been but in vain to offer at any argument, or for any man to talk of giving a reason for his actions; and this alone has been the cause why, when other men, who I think have less to say in their own defense, are appealing to the public and struggling to defend themselves, I alone have been silent under the infinite clamors and reproaches, causeless curses, unusual threatenings, and the most unjust and unjurious treatment in the world.

I hear much of people's calling out to punish the guilty, but very few are concerned to clear the innocent. I hope some will be inclined to judge impartially, and have yet reserved so much of the Christian as to believe, and at least to hope, that a rational creature cannot abandon himself so as to act without some reason, and are willing not only to have me defend myself, but to be able to answer for me where they hear me causelessly insulted by others, and therefore are willing to have such just arguments put into their mouths as the cause will bear.

As for those who are prepossessed, and according to the modern justice of parties are resolved to be so, let them go; I am not arguing with them, but against them; they act so contrary to justice, to reason, to religion, so contrary to the rules of Christians and of good manners, that they are not to be argued with, but to be exposed or entirely neglected. I have a receipt against all the uneasiness which it may be supposed to give me, and that is, to contemn slander, and think it not worth the least concern; neither should I think it worth while to give any answer to it, if it were not on some other accounts, of which I shall speak as I go on. If any young man ask me why I am in such haste to publish this matter at this time, among many other good reasons which I could give, these are some:—

1. I think I have long enough been made Fabula Vulgi, and borne the weight of general slander; and I should be wanting to truth, to my family, and to myself, if I did not give a fair and true state of my conduct, for impartial men to judge of when I am no more in being to answer for myself.

2. By the hints of mortality, and by the infirmities of a life of sorrow and fatigue, I have reason to think I am not a great way off from, if not very near to, the great ocean of eternity, and the time may not be long ere I embark on the last voyage. Wherefore I think I should even accounts with this world before I go, that no actions [slanders] may lie against my heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns, to disturb them in the peaceable possession of their father's [character] inheritance.

3. I fear—God grant I have not a second sight in it—that this lucid interval of temper and moderation which shines, though dimly too, upon us at this time, will be of but short continuance; and that some men, who know not how to use the advantage God has put into their hands with moderation, will push, in spite of the best Prince in the world, at such extravagant things, and act with such an intemperate forwardness, as will revive the heats and animosities which wise and good men were in hopes should be allayed by the happy accession of the King to the throne.

It is and ever was my opinion, that moderation is the only virtue by which the peace and tranquillity of this nation can be preserved. Even the King himself—I believe his Majesty will allow me that freedom—can only be happy in the enjoyment of the crown by a moderative administration. If his Majesty should be obliged, contrary to his known disposition, to join with intemperate councils, if it does not lessen his security I am persuaded it will lessen his satisfaction. It cannot be pleasant or agreeable, and I think it cannot be safe, to any just prince to rule over a divided people, split into incensed and exasperated parties. Though a skillful mariner may have courage to master a tempest, and goes fearless through a storm, yet he can never be said to delight in the danger; a fresh fair gale and a quiet sea is the pleasure of his voyage, and we have a saying worth notice to them that are otherwise minded,—« Quit ama periculum, periebat in illo. »

ENGAGING A MAID-SERVANT

From ‹Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business›

Besides, the fear of spoiling their clothes makes them afraid of household work, so that in a little time we shall have none but chambermaids and nurserymaids; and of this let me give you one instance. My family is composed of myself and sister, a man and maid; and being without the last, a young wench came to hire herself. The man was gone out, and my sister above-stairs, so I opened the door myself, and this person presented herself to my view, dressed completely, more like a visitor than a servant-maid; she, not knowing me, asked for my sister. « Pray, madam, » said I, « be pleased to walk into the parlor; she shall wait on you presently. » Accordingly I handed madam in, who took it very cordially. After some apology I left her alone for a minute or two, while I, stupid wretch! ran up to my sister and told her there was a gentlewoman below come to visit her. « Dear brother, » said she, « don't leave her alone; go down and entertain her while I dress myself. » Accordingly down I went, and talked of indifferent affairs; meanwhile my sister dressed herself all over again, not being willing to be seen in an undress. At last she came down dressed as clean as her visitor; but how great was my surprise when I found my fine lady a common servant-wench.

My sister, understanding what she was, began to inquire what wages she expected. She modestly asked but eight pounds a year. The next question was, « What work she could do to deserve such wages? » to which she answered she could clean a house, or dress a common family dinner. « But cannot you wash, » replied my sister, « or get up linen? » She answered in the negative, and said she would undertake neither, nor would she go into a family that did not put out their linen to wash and hire a charwoman to scour. She desired to see the house, and having carefully surveyed it, said the work was too hard for her, nor could she undertake it. This put my sister beyond all patience, and me into the greatest admiration. « Young woman,» she said, « you have made a mistake; I want a housemaid, and you are a chambermaid.» « No, madam,» replied she, « I am not needlewoman enough for that.» « And yet you ask eight pounds a year,» replied my sister. « Yes, madam,» said she, « nor shall I bate a farthing.» « Then get you gone for a lazy impudent baggage,» said I; « you want to be a boarder, not a servant; have you a fortune or estate, that you dress at that rate?» « No, sir,» said she, « but I hope I may wear what I work for without offense.» « What! you work?» interrupted my sister; « why, you do not seem willing to undertake any work; you will not wash nor scour; you cannot dress a dinner for company; you are no needlewoman; and our little house of two rooms on a floor is too much for you. For God's sake, what can you do?» « Madam,» replied she pertly, « I know my business, and do not fear service; there are more places than parish churches: if you wash at home, you should have a laundrymaid; if you give entertainments, you must have a cookmaid; if you have any needlework, you should have a chambermaid; and such a house as this is enough for a housemaid, in all conscience.»

I was so pleased at the wit, and astonished at the impudence of the girl, so dismissed her with thanks for her instructions, assuring her that when I kept four maids she should be housemaid if she pleased.

THE DEVIL

From ‹The True-Born Englishman›

Wherever God erects a house of prayer,
The Devil always builds a chapel there;
And 'twill be found upon examination,
The latter has the largest congregation.
For ever since he first debauched the mind,
He made a perfect conquest of mankind.
With uniformity of service, he
Reigns with general aristocracy.

No non-conforming sects disturb his reign,
For of his yoke there's very few complain.
He knows the genius and the inclination,
And matches proper sins for every nation.
He needs no standing army government;
He always rules us by our own consent;
His laws are easy, and his gentle sway
Makes it exceeding pleasant to obey.
The list of his vicegerents and commanders
Outdoes your Cæsars or your Alexanders.
They never fail of his infernal aid,
And he's as certain ne'er to be betrayed.
Through all the world they spread his vast command,
And death's eternal empire is maintained.
They rule so politicly and so well,
As if they were Lords Justices of hell;
Duly divided to debauch mankind,
And plant infernal dictates in his mind.

THERE IS A GOD

From ‹The Storm›

For in the darkest of the black abode
    There's not a devil but believes a God.
    Old Lucifer has sometimes tried
    To have himself deified;
But devils nor men the being of God denied,
Till men of late found out new ways to sin,
And turned the devil out to let the Atheist in.
But when the mighty element began,
  And storms the weighty truth explain,
Almighty power upon the whirlwind rode,
  And every blast proclaimed aloud
There is, there is, there is a God.

EDUARD DOUWES DEKKER

(1820–1887)

Ten years after ‘Uncle Tom's Cabin,’ there appeared in Amsterdam a book that caused as great a sensation among the Dutch coffee-traders on the Amstel, as had Harriet Beecher Stowe's wonderful story among the slaveholders at the South. This book was ‘Max Havelaar,’ and its author, veiled under the suggestive pen-name of «Multatuli» («who have suffered much»), at once became famous. It frankly admitted that it was a novel with a purpose, and this purpose was to bring home to his countrymen the untold sufferings and oppression to which the natives of the Dutch East Indies were subjected, in order that the largest possible profit might flow into the coffers of the people of Holland. Multatuli, under the disguise of fiction, professed to give facts he had himself collected on the spot.

Eduard Douwes Dekker, born in 1820 in Amsterdam, went as a youth of seventeen to the Dutch colonies. There for nearly twenty years he was in the employ of the government, obtaining at last the post of Assistant Resident of Lebak, a province of Java. In this responsible position he used his influence to stem the abuses and extortions practiced by the native chiefs against the defenseless populace. But his humanitarianism clashed with the interests of his government, and sacrificing a brilliant career to a principle, he sent in his resignation and returned to Holland in 1856 a poor man. He began to put his experiences on paper, and in 1860 published the book that made him famous. ‘Max Havelaar’ is a bitter arraignment of the Dutch colonial system, and gives a more excruciating picture of the slavery of the natives of fair «Insulind» than ever existed in the South. For nearly three hundred years Dutch burghers on the Scheldt, the Maas, and the Amstel, have waxed fat on the labors of the Malays of the far East. In these islands of the East-Indian Archipelago the relations between the Europeans and the Dutch are peculiar, based on the policy of the government of getting the largest possible revenues out of these fertile possessions. Practically the native is a Dutch subject, and the product of his labor goes directly to Holland; nominally he is still ruled by his tribal chief, to whom he is blindly and superstitiously devoted. Playing on this feudal attachment, the Dutch, while theoretically pledging themselves to protect the defenseless populace against rapacity, have yet so arranged the administration that the chiefs have unlimited opportunities of extortion. They are paid premiums on whatever their provinces furnish for the foreign market, and as they have practically full control over the persons and property of their subjects, they force these poor wretches to contribute whatever they may demand in unpaid labor and provisions, besides the land taxes.

And there is yet another hardship. Rice is the staple product of Java, but as that does not pay so well as coffee, sugar, indigo, or spices, the Javanese is driven away from the rice fields he loves, and famine is often the result.

> «Famine? in Java, the rich and fertile, famine? Yes, reader, a few years ago whole districts were depopulated by famine; mothers offered to sell their children for food; mothers ate their own children. But then the mother country interfered. In the halls of the Dutch Parliament complaints were made, and the then reigning governor had to give orders that THE EXTENSION OF THE SO-CALLED EUROPEAN MARKET SHOULD NO LONGER BE PUSHED TO THE EXTREMITY OF FAMINE.»

The book is an eloquent plea for more humane treatment of these wretches. In glowing colors Dekker paints the condition of Java, its scenery, its inhabitants, the extortions of the native regents, and the rapacity of the European traders. The truth of these accusations has never been disputed; indeed, it has been said that he kept on this side of exaggeration. At the International Congress for the Promotion of Social Science, at Amsterdam in 1863, he challenged his critics to prove him false, but no one came forward. One high government official indeed said that he could refute ‘Max Havelaar,’ but that it was not in his interest to do so.

Despite the sensation the book made, affairs in the East remained pretty much the same as before. Dekker tried in vain to get some influence in Holland, but he had killed himself politically by avowing that ‘Max Havelaar’ was not written in the interests of either party, but was the utterance of a champion of humanity. Thoroughly disappointed in his countrymen, he exiled himself and went to live in Germany in 1866. But he did not therefore lay down a pen that had become in his hands a powerful weapon. He published a number of books on political, social, and philosophic subjects, in the form of stories, dramas, aphorisms, or polemics. Noteworthy among these are his fine parables, the novel ‘La Sainte Vierge’ (The Holy Virgin); the drama in blank, ‘Vorstenschool’ (School for Princes), containing many fine thoughts, and still one of the most popular plays of the day; and the incomplete ‘Geschiedem's van Wontertje Pieterse’ (Story of Wontertje Pieterse), published in 1888 by his widow, who also brought out his letters, and in 1892 a complete edition of his works.

The writings of Dekker are marked by a fiery yet careful style, Oriental richness of imagery, and originality and independence of thought. He wrote as social reformer, and attacked with unrivaled power of sarcasm all manner of cant, sham, and red-tape. His works betray the disappointment of a defeated idealist. He was a man of marked individuality, and strongly attracted or repelled people. For the last few years of his life he ceased to write, and lived in retirement in Nieder-Ingelheim on the Rhine, where he died February 19th, 1887.

MULTATULI'S LAST WORDS TO THE READER

Yes, I, Multatuli, "who have suffered much,"— I take the pen. I do not make any excuses for the form of my book,—that form was thought proper to obtain my object. . . . *I will be read!* Yes, I will be read. I will be read by statesmen who are obliged to pay attention to the signs of the times; by men of letters, who must also look into the book of which so many bad things are said; by merchants, who have an interest in the coffee auctions; by lady's-maids, who read me for a few farthings; by governors-general in retirement; by ministers who have something to do; by the lackeys of these Excellencies; by mutes, who, *more majorum*, will say that I attack God Almighty, when I attack only the god which they made according to their own image; by the members of the representative chambers, who must know what happens in the extensive possessions over the sea which belong to Holland. . . .

Ay, I *shall* be read!

When I obtain this I shall be content, for I did not intend to write well. . . . I wished to write so as to be heard; and as one who cries "Stop thief!" does not care about the style of his *impromptu* address to the public, I too am indifferent to criticism of the manner in which I cried *my* "Stop thief!"

"The book is a medley; there is no order, nothing but a desire to make a sensation. The style is bad; the author is inexperienced; no talent, no method." . . .

Good! good! . . . all very well! . . . *but the Javanese are ill-treated.* For the merit of my book is this: that *refutation* of its main features is *impossible.* And the greater the disapprobation of my book the better I shall be pleased, for the chance of being *heard* will be so much the greater;— and that is what I desire.

But you whom I dare to interrupt in your business or in your retirement,—ye ministers and governors-general,—do not calculate too much upon the inexperience of my pen. I could exercise it, and perhaps by dint of some exertion, attain to that skill which would make the truth heard by the people. Then I should ask of that people a place in the representative chambers, were it only to protest against the certificates which are given *vice versa* by Indian functionaries.

To protest against the endless expeditions sent, and heroic deeds performed against poor miserable creatures, whose ill treatment has driven them to revolt.

To protest against the cowardice of general orders, that brand the honor of the nation by invoking public charity on behalf of the victims of inveterate piracy.

It is true those rebels were reduced by starvation to skeletons, while those pirates could defend themselves.

And if that place were refused me, . . . if I were still disbelieved, . . . then I should translate my book into the few languages that I know, and the many that I yet can learn, to put that question to Europe which I have in vain put to Holland.

And in every capital such a refrain as this would be heard: «There is a band of robbers between Germany and the Scheldt!»

And if this were of no avail, . . . then I should translate my book into *Malay*, *Javanese*, *Soudanese*, *Alfoer*, *Boegi*, and *Battah*.

And I should sharpen *Klewangs*, the scimitars and the sabres, by rousing with warlike songs the minds of those martyrs whom I have promised to help—I, *Multatuli*, would do this!

Yes! delivery and help, *lawfully if possible;—lawfully with violence* if need be.

And that would be very pernicious to the COFFEE AUCTIONS OF THE DUTCH TRADING COMPANY!

For I am no fly-rescuing poet, no rapt dreamer like the down-trodden Havelaar, who did his duty with the courage of a lion and endured starvation with the patience of a marmot in winter.

This book is an introduction. . . .

I shall increase in strength and sharpness of weapons, according as it may be necessary.

Heaven grant that it may not be necessary! . . .

No, it *will* not be necessary! For it is to thee I dedicate my book: WILLIAM THE THIRD, King, Grand Duke, Prince, . . . more than Prince, Grand Duke, and King, . . . EMPEROR of the magnificent empire of INSULIND, which winds about the equator like a garland of emeralds! . . .

I ask THEE if it be thine IMPERIAL will that the Havelaars should be bespattered with the mud of Slymerings and Drystubbles; and that thy *more* than *thirty millions* of SUBJECTS far away should be *ill treated and should suffer extortion* in THY name!

From ‹Max Havelaar.›

IDYLL OF SAÏDJAH AND ADINDA

From ‹Max Havelaar›

SAÏDJAH'S father had a buffalo, with which he plowed his field. When this buffalo was taken away from him by the district chief at Parang-Koodjang he was very dejected, and did not speak a word for many a day. For the time for plowing was come, and he had to fear that if the rice field was not worked in time, the opportunity to sow would be lost, and lastly, that there would be no paddy to cut, none to keep in the storeroom of the house. He feared that his wife would have no rice, nor Saïdjah himself, who was still a child, nor his little brothers and sisters. And the district chief too would accuse him to the Assistant Resident if he was behindhand in the payment of his land taxes, for this is punished by the law. Saïdjah's father then took a poniard which was an heirloom from his father. The poniard was not very handsome, but there were silver bands round the sheath, and at the end there was a silver plate. He sold this poniard to a Chinaman who dwelt in the capital, and came home with twenty-four guilders, for which money he bought another buffalo.

Saïdjah, who was then about seven years old, soon made friends with the new buffalo. It is not without meaning that I say «made friends,» for it is indeed touching to see how the buffalo is attached to the little boy who watches over and feeds him. The large strong animal bends its heavy head to the right, to the left, or downward, just as the pressure of the child's finger, which he knows and understands, directs.

Such a friendship little Saïdjah had soon been able to make with the new-comer. The buffalo turned willingly on reaching the end of the field, and did not lose an inch of ground when plowing backwards the new furrow. Quite near were the rice fields of the father of Adinda (the child that was to marry Saïdjah); and when the little brothers of Adinda came to the limit of their fields just at the same time that the father of Saïdjah was there with his plow, then the children called out merrily to each other, and each praised the strength and the docility of his buffalo. Saïdjah was nine and Adinda six, when this buffalo was taken by the chief of the district of Parang-Koodjang. Saïdjah's father, who was very poor, thereupon sold to a Chinaman two silver curtain-hooks — heirlooms from the parents of his wife — for eighteen guilders, and bought a new buffalo.

When this buffalo had also been taken away and slaughtered —

(I told you, reader, that my story is monotonous)

. . . Saïdjah's father fled out of the country, for he was much afraid of being punished for not paying his land taxes, and he had not another heirloom to sell, that he might buy a new buffalo. However, he went on for some years after the loss of his last buffalo, by working with hired animals for plowing; but that is a very ungrateful labor, and moreover sad for a person who has had buffaloes of his own.

Saïdjah's mother died of grief; and then it was that his father, in a moment of dejection, fled from Bantam in order to endeavor to get labor in the Buitenzorg districts.

But he was punished with stripes because he had left Lebak without a passport, and was brought back by the police to Badoer. But he was not long in prison, for he died soon afterwards. Saïdjah was already fifteen years of age when his father set out for Buitenzorg; and he did not accompany him hither, because he had other plans in view. He had been told that there were at Batavia many gentlemen who drove in two-wheeled carriages, and that it would be easy for him to get a post as driver. He would gain much in that way if he behaved well,— perhaps be able to save in three years enough money to buy two buffaloes. This was a smiling prospect for him. He entered Adinda's house, and communicated to her his plans.

« Think of it! when I come back, we shall be old enough to marry and shall possess two buffaloes: . . . but if I find you married? »

«Saïdjah, you know very well that I shall marry nobody but you; my father promised me to your father.»

«And you yourself?»

«I shall marry you, you may be sure of that.»

«When I come back, I will call from afar off.»

«Who shall hear it, if we are stamping rice in the village?»

«That is true, . . . but Adinda— . . . oh yes, this is better; wait for me under the oak wood, under the Retapan.»

«But Saïdjah, how can I know when I am to go to the Retapan?»

«Count the moons; I shall stay away three times twelve moons. . . . See, Adinda, at every new moon cut a notch in your rice block. When you have cut three times twelve lines, I will be under the Retapan the next day: . . . do you promise to be there?»

«Yes, Saïdjah, I will be there under the Retapan, near the oak wood, when you come back.»

. . . .

[Saïdjah returns with money and trinkets at the appointed time, but does not find Adinda under the Retapan.]

. . . But if she were ill or . . . dead?

Like a wounded stag Saïdjah flew along the path leading from the Retapan to the village where Adinda lived. But . . . was it hurry, his eagerness, that prevented him from finding Adinda's house? He had already rushed to the end of the road, through the village, and like one mad he returned and beat his head because he must have passed her house without seeing it. But again he was at the entrance to the village, and . . . O God, was it a dream? . . .

Again he had not found the house of Adinda. Again he flew back and suddenly stood still. . . . And the women of Badoer came out of their houses, and saw with sorrow poor Saïdjah standing there, for they knew him and understood that he was looking for the house of Adinda, and they knew that there was no house of Adinda in the village of Badoer.

For when the district chief of Parang-Koodjang had taken away Adinda's father's buffaloes . . .

(I told you, reader! that my narrative was monotonous.)

. . . Adinda's mother died of grief, and her baby sister died because she had no mother, and had no one to suckle her.

And Adinda's father, who feared to be punished for not paying his land taxes . . .

(I know, I know that my tale is monotonous.)

. . . had fled out of the country; he had taken Adinda and her brother with him. He had gone to Tjilang-Rahan, bordering on the sea. There he had concealed himself in the woods and waited for some others that had been robbed of their buffaloes by the district chief of Parang-Koodjang, and all of whom feared punishment for not paying their land taxes. Then they had at night taken possession of a fishing boat, and steered northward to the Lampoons.

[Saïdjah, following their route] arrived in the Lampoons, where the inhabitants were in insurrection against the Dutch rule. He joined a troop of Badoer men, not so much to fight as to seek Adinda; for he had a tender heart, and was more disposed to sorrow than to bitterness.

One day that the insurgents had been beaten, he wandered through a village that had just been taken by the Dutch, and was therefore in flames. Saïdjah knew that the troop that had been destroyed there consisted for the most part of Badoer men. He wandered like a ghost among the houses which were not yet burned down, and found the corpse of Adinda's father with a bayonet wound in the breast. Near him Saïdjah saw the three murdered brothers of Adinda, still only children, and a little further lay the corpse of Adinda, naked and horribly mutilated.

. . . .

Then Saïdjah went to meet some soldiers who were driving, at the point of the bayonet, the surviving insurgents into the fire of the burning houses; he embraced the broad bayonets, pressed forward with all his might, and still repulsed the soldiers with a last exertion, until their weapons were buried to the sockets in his breast.

THOMAS DEKKER

(1570?–1637?)

Thomas Dekker, the genial realist, the Dickens of Jacobean London, has left in his works the impress of a most lovable personality, but the facts with which to surround that personality are of the scantiest. He was born about 1570 in London; at least in 1637 he speaks of himself as over threescore years of age. This is the only clue we have to the date of his birth. He came probably of a tradesman's family, for he describes better than any of his fellows in art the life of the lower middle class, and enters into the thoughts and feelings of that class with a heartiness which is possible only after long and familiar association. He was not a university man, but absorbed his classical knowledge as Shakespeare did, through association with the wits of his time.

He is first mentioned in Henslowe's diary in 1597, and after that his name appears frequently. He was evidently a dramatic hack, working for that manager, adapting and making over old plays and writing new ones. He must have been popular too, for his name appears oftener than that of any of his associates. Yet his industry and popularity could not always keep him above water. Henslowe was not a generous paymaster, and the unlucky dramatist knew the inside of the debtor's prison cell; more than once the manager advanced sums to bail him out. Oldys says he was in prison from 1613 to 1616. After 1637 we find his name no more.

As a dramatist, Dekker was most active between the years 1598 and 1602. In one of those years alone he was engaged on twelve plays. Many of these have been lost; of the few that remain, two of the most characteristic belong to this period. ‘The Shoemaker's Holiday,’ published in 1599, shows Dekker on his genial, realistic side, with his sense of fun and his hearty sympathy with the life of the people. It bubbles over with the delight in mere living, and is full of kindly feeling toward all the world. It was sure to appeal to its audience, especially to the pit, where the tradesmen and artisans with their wives applauded, and noisiest of all, the 'prentices shouted their satisfaction: here they saw themselves and their masters brought on the stage, somewhat idealized, but still full of frolic and good-nature. It is one of the brightest and pleasantest of Elizabethan comedies. Close on its heels followed ‘The Pleasant Comedy of Old Fortunatus.’ Here Dekker the idealist, the poet of luxurious fancy and rich yet delicate imagination, is seen at his best. Fortunatus with his wishing-hat and wonderful purse appealed to the romantic spirit of the time, when men still sailed in search of the Hesperides, compounded the elixir of youth, and sought for the philosopher's stone. Dekker worked over an old play of the same name; the subject of both was taken from the old German *volksbuch* ‹Fortunatus› of 1519. Among the collaborators of Dekker at this time was Ben Jonson. Both these men were realists, but Jonson slashed into life with bitter satire, whereas Dekker cloaked over its frailties with a tender humor. Again, Jonson was a conscientious artist, aiming at perfection; Dekker, while capable of much higher poetry, was often careless and slipshod. No wonder that the dictator scorned his somewhat irresponsible co-worker. The precise nature of their quarrel, one of the most famous among authors, is not known; it culminated in 1601, when Jonson produced ‹The Poetaster,› a play in which Dekker and Marston were mercilessly ridiculed. Dekker replied shortly in ‹Satiromastix, or the Untrussing of the Humorous Poet,› a burlesque full of good-natured mockery of his antagonist.

Dekker wrote, in conjunction with Webster, ‹Westward Ho,› Northward Ho,› and ‹Sir Thomas Wyatt›; with Middleton, ‹The Roaring Girl›; with Massinger, ‹The Virgin Martyr›; and with Ford, ‹The Sun's Darling› and ‹The Witch of Edmonton.› Among the products of Dekker's old age, ‹Match Me in London› is ranked among his half-dozen best plays, and ‹The Wonder of a Kingdom› is fair journeyman's work.

One of the most versatile of the later Elizabethans,—prolonging their style and ideas into the new world of the Stuarts,—Dekker was also prominent as pamphleteer. He first appeared as such in 1603, with ‹The Wonderfull Yeare 1603, wherein is showed the picture of London lying sicke of the Plague,› a vivid description of the pest, which undoubtedly served Defoe as model in his famous book on the same subject. The best known of his many pamphlets, however, is ‹The Gul's Horne Booke,› a graphic description of the ways and manners of the gallants of the time. These various tracts are invaluable for the light they throw on the social life of Jacobean London.

Lastly, Dekker as song-writer must not be forgotten. He had the genuine lyric gift, and poured forth his bird-notes, sweet, fresh, and spontaneous, full of the singer's joy in his song. He also wrote some very beautiful prayers.

Varied and unequal as Dekker's work is, he is one of the hardest among the Elizabethans to classify. He at times rises to the very heights of poetic inspiration, soaring above most of his contemporaries, to drop all of a sudden down to a dead level of prose. But he makes up for his shortcomings by his whole-hearted, manly view of life, his compassion for the weak, his sympathy with the lowly, his determination to make the best of everything, and to show the good hidden away under the evil.

> «Toil, envy, want, the patron and the jail,» —

these he knew from bitter experience, yet never allowed them to overcloud his buoyant spirits, but made them serve his artistic purposes. Joyousness is the prevailing note of his work, mingled with a pathetic undertone of patience.

FROM ‹THE GUL'S HORNE BOOKE›

How a Gallant Should Behave Himself in Powles Walk*

Now for your venturing into the Walke: be circumspect and wary what piller you come in at, and take heed in any case (as you love the reputation of your honour) that you avoide the *serving-man's* dogg; but bend your course directly in the middle line, that the whole body of the Church may appear to be yours; where, in view of all, you may publish your suit in what manner you affect most, either with the slide of your cloake from the one shoulder, and then you must (as twere in anger) suddenly snatch at the middle of the inside (if it be taffata at the least) and so by the meanes your costly lining is betrayed, or else by the pretty advantage of complement. But one note by the way do I especially wooe you to, the neglect of which makes many of our gallants cheape and ordinary; that you by no means be seen above fowre turnes, but in the fifth make your selfe away, either in some of the Sempsters' shops, the new Tobacco-office, or amongst the Bookesellers, where, if you cannot reade, exercise your smoke, and inquire who has writ against this divine weede, &c. For this withdrawing yourselfe a little will much benefite your suit, which else by too long walking would be stale to the whole spectators: but howsoever, if Powles Jacks be up with their elbowes, and quarrelling to strike eleven, as soone as ever the clock has parted them and ended the fray with his hammer, let not the Duke's gallery conteyne you any longer, but passe away apace in open view. In which departure, if by chance you either encounter, or aloofe off throw your inquisitive eye upon any knight or squire, being your familiar, salute him not by his name of Sir such a one, or so, but call him *Ned* or *Jack*, &c. This will set off your estimation with great men: and if (tho there bee a dozen companies betweene you, tis the better) hee call aloud to you (for thats most gentile), to know where he shall find you at two a clock, tell him at such an Ordinary, or such; and bee sure to name those that are deerest; and whither none but your gallants resort. After dinner you may appeare againe, having translated yourselfe out of your English cloth cloak, into a light Turky-grogram (if you have that happiness of shifting) and then be seene (for a turn or two) to correct your teeth with some quill or silver instrument, and to cleanse your gummes with a wrought handkercher: It skilles not whether you dinde or no (thats best knowne to your stomach) or in what place you dinde, though it were with cheese (of your owne mother's making, in your chamber or study). . . . Suck this humour up especially. Put off to none, unlesse his hatband be of a newer fashion than yours, and three degrees quainter; but for him that wears a trebled cipres about his hatte (though he were an Alderman's sonne), never move to him; for hees suspected to be worse than a *gull* and not worth the putting off to, that cannot observe the time of his hatband, nor know what fashioned block is most kin to his head: for in my opinion, ye braine that cannot choose his felt well (being the head ornament) must needes powre folly into all the rest of the members, and be an absolute confirmed foule in *Summâ Totali*. . . . The great dyal is your last monument; these bestow some half of the threescore minutes, to observe the sawciness of the Jaikes that are above the man in the moone there; the strangenesse of the motion will quit your labour. Besides you may heere have fit occasion to discover your watch, by taking it forth and setting the wheeles to the time of Powles, which, I assure you, goes truer by five notes then S. *Sepulchers* chimes. The benefit that will arise from hence is this, that you publish your charge in maintaining a gilded clocke; and withall the world shall know that you are a time-server. By this I imagine you have walkt your bellyful, and thereupon being weary, or (which rather I believe) being most gentlemanlike hungry, it is fit that I brought you in to the Duke; so (because he follows the fashion of great men, in keeping no house, and that therefore you must go seeke your dinner) suffer me to take you by the hand, and lead you into an Ordinary.

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* The middle aisle of St. Paul's in London was the fashionable walk.

SLEEP

Do but consider what an excellent thing sleep is; it is so inestimable a jewel that if a tyrant would give his crown for an hour's slumber, it cannot be bought; yea, so greatly are we indebted to this kinsman of death, that we owe the better tributary half of our life to him; and there is good cause why we should do so; for sleep is that golden chain that ties health and our bodies together. Who complains of want, of wounds, of cares, of great men's oppressions, of captivity, whilst he sleepeth? Beggars in their beds take as much pleasure as kings. Can we therefore surfeit on this delicate ambrosia? Can we drink too much of that, whereof to taste too little tumbles us into a churchyard; and to use it but indifferently throws us into Bedlam? No, no. Look upon Endymion, the moon's minion, who slept threescore and fifteen years, and was not a hair the worse for it. Can lying abed till noon then, being not the threescore and fifteenth thousand part of his nap, be hurtful?

THE PRAISE OF FORTUNE

From ‹Old Fortunatus›

Fortune smiles, cry holiday!
Dimples on her cheek do dwell.
Fortune frowns, cry well-a-day!
Her love is heaven, her hate is hell.
Since heaven and hell obey her power,—
Tremble when her eyes do lower.
Since heaven and hell her power obey,
When she smiles, cry holiday!
Holiday with joy we cry,
And bend and bend, and merrily
Sing hymns to Fortune's deity,
Sing hymns to Fortune's deity.

Chorus

Let us sing merrily, merrily, merrily,
With our songs let heaven resound.
Fortune's hands our heads have crowned.
Let us sing merrily, merrily, merrily.

CONTENT

From ‹Patient Grissil›

Art thou poor, yet hast thou golden slumbers?
O sweet Content!
Art thou rich, yet is thy mind perplexed?
O punishment!
Dost thou laugh to see how fools are vexed
To add to golden numbers golden numbers?
O sweet Content, O sweet, O sweet Content!

Work apace, apace, apace, apace,
Honest labor bears a lovely face.
Then hey nonny, nonny; hey nonny, nonny.

Canst drink the waters of the crispèd spring?
O sweet Content!
Swim'st thou in wealth, yet sink'st in thine own tears?
O Punishment!
Then he that patiently Want's burden bears
No burden bears, but is a king, a king.
O sweet Content, O sweet, O sweet Content!

RUSTIC SONG

From ‹The Sun's Darling›

Haymakers, rakers, reapers, and mowers,
Wait on your Summer Queen!
Dress up with musk-rose her eglantine bowers,
Daffodils strew the green!
Sing, dance, and play,
'Tis holiday!
The sun does bravely shine
On our ears of corn.
Rich as a pearl
Comes every girl.
This is mine, this is mine, this is mine.
Let us die ere away they be borne.

Bow to our Sun, to our Queen, and that fair one
Come to behold our sports:
Each bonny lass here is counted a rare one,
As those in princes' courts.

These and we
With country glee,
Will teach the woods to resound,
And the hills with echoes hollow.
Skipping lambs
Their bleating dams
'Mongst kids shall trip it round;
For joy thus our wenches we follow.

Wind, jolly huntsmen, your neat bugles shrilly,
Hounds, make a lusty cry;
Spring up, you falconers, partridges freely,
Then let your brave hawks fly!
Horses amain,
Over ridge, over plain,
The dogs have the stag in chase:
'Tis a sport to content a king.
So ho! ho! through the skies
How the proud birds flies,
And sousing, kills with a grace!
Now the deer falls; hark! how they ring.

LULLABY

From ‹Patient Grissil›

Golden slumbers kiss your eyes,
Smiles awake you when you rise.
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby.
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

Care is heavy, therefore sleep you.
You are care, and care must keep you.
Sleep, pretty wantons, do not cry,
And I will sing a lullaby.
Rock them, rock them, lullaby.

JEAN FRANÇOIS CASIMIR DELAVIGNE

(1793–1843)

BY FREDERIC LOLIÉE

This French lyrical poet and dramatist, born in Havre in 1793, and brought up at Paris, was awarded a prize by the Académie Française in 1811, elected a member of that illustrious body July 7th, 1825, and died December 11th, 1843. When hardly twenty years of age he had already made his name famous by dithyrambs, the form of which, imitated from the ancients, enabled him to express in sufficiently poetic manner quite modern sentiments. Possessed of brilliant and easy imagination, moderately enthusiastic, and more sober than powerful, he hit upon a lucky vein which promptly led him to fame. He described the recent disasters of his country in fine odes entitled 'Messéniennes,' in allusion to the chants in which the defeated Messenians deplored the hardships inflicted on them by the Spartans. Those political elegies were named—'La Bataille de Waterloo' (The Battle of Waterloo); 'La Dévastation du Musée' (The Spoliation of the Museum); 'Sur le Besoin de S'unir après le Départ des Étrangers' (On the Necessity of Union after the Departure of the Foreigners). They expressed emotions agitating the mind of the country. At the same time they appealed to the heart of the «liberals» of the period by uttering their regrets for vanished power, their rancor against the victorious party, their fears for threatened liberty. The circumstances, the passions of the day, as also the awakening of young and new talent, all concurred to favor Casimir Delavigne, who almost from the very first attained high reputation. In 1819 the publication of two more Messéniennes, on the life and death of Joan of Arc,—inspired like the first with deep patriotic fervor,—was received with enthusiasm.

Casimir Delavigne

Earlier even than the day of Lamartine and Victor Hugo, Casimir Delavigne had the glory of stirring the heart of France. He had the added merit of maintaining, after Beaumarchais and before Émile

Augier, the dignity of high comedy. Ingenious scenes of life, lively and spirited details, grace and delicacy of style, save from oblivion such pieces as ‹L'École des Vieillards› (The School of Age), first performed by the great artists Mademoiselle Mars and Talma; and ‹Don Juan d'Autriche› (Don John of Austria), a prose comedy. Other dramas of his — ‹Marino Faliero,› ‹Les Vêpres Siciliennes› (The Sicilian Vespers), ‹Louis XI.,› ‹Les Enfants d'Edouard› (The Children of Edward), and ‹La Fille du Cid› (The Daughter of the Cid) — are still read with admiration, or acted to applauding spectators. A pure disciple of Racine at first, Delavigne deftly managed to adopt some innovations of the romanticist school. ‹Marino Faliero› was the first of his productions in which, relinquishing the so-called classic rules, he endeavored, as a French critic fitly remarks, to introduce a kind of eclecticism in stage literature; a bold attempt, tempered with prudent reserve, in which he wisely combined the processes favored by the new school with current tradition. That play is indeed a happy mixture of drama and comedy. It contains familiar dialogues and noble outbursts, which however do not violate the proprieties of academic style.

Though he never displayed the genius of Lamartine or of Victor Hugo, and though some of his pictures have faded since the appearance of the dazzling productions of the great masters of romanticism, Casimir Delavigne still ranks high in the literature of his country and century, thanks to the lofty and steady qualities, to the tender and generous feeling, to the noble independence, which were the honorable characteristics of his talent and his individuality. His works, first published in Paris in 1843 in six octavo volumes, went through many subsequent editions.

Frederic Loliée

THE CONFESSION OF LOUIS XI.

[On the point of dying, Louis XI. clings desperately to life, and summons before him a holy monk, Francis de Paula, whom he implores to work a miracle in his favor and prolong his life.]

Dramatis personæ: — King Louis XI., *and* Saint Francis de Paula, *founder of the order of the Franciscan friars.*

Louis — We are alone now.

Francis — What do you wish of me?

Louis [*who has knelt down*] — At your knees see me trembling with hope and fear.

Francis—What can I do for you?

Louis—Everything, Father; you can do everything: you can call the dead to life again.

Francis—I!

Louis—To the dead you say, « Leave your graves! » and they leave them.

Francis—Who? I?

Louis—You bid our ailments to be cured.

Francis—I, my son?

Louis—And they are cured. When you command the skies clear, the wind suddenly blows or likewise abates; the falling thunderbolt at your command moves back to the clouds. Oh, I implore you, who in the air can keep up the beneficent dew or let it pour its welcome freshness on the withering plant, impart fresh vigor to my old limbs. See me; I am dying; revive my drooping energy; stretch ye out your arms to me, touch ye those livid features of mine, and the spell of your hands will cause my wrinkles to vanish.

Francis—What do you ask of me? You surprise me, my son. Am I equal to God? From your lips I first learn that I go abroad rendering oracles, and with my hands working miracles.

Louis—At least ten years, father! grant me ten more years to live, and upon you I shall lavish honors and presents. . . . I shall found shrines to your name, in gold and jasper shall have your relics set; but!—twenty years more life are too little a reward for so much wealth and incense. I beseech you, work a whole miracle! Do not cut so short the thread of my life. A whole miracle! give me new life and prolong my days!

Francis—To do God's work is not in his creature's power. What! when everything dies, you alone should last! King, such is not God's will. I his feeble creature cannot alter for you the course of nature. All that which grows must vanish, all that which is born must perish, man himself and his works, the tree and its fruit alike. All that produces does so only for a time; 'tis the law here below, for eternity death alone shall fructify.

Louis—You wear out my patience. Do your duty, monk! Work in my favor your marvelous power; for if you refuse, I shall compel you. Do you forget that I am a king? The holy oil anointed my forehead. Oh, pardon me! but it is your duty to do more for kings, for crowned heads, than for those obscure and unfortunate wretches whom, but for your prayers, God in heaven would never have remembered.

Francis — Kings and their subjects are equal in the eyes of the Lord; he owes you his aid as to the rest of his children; be more just to yourself, and claim for your soul that help for which you beg.

Louis [*eagerly*] — No, not so much at a time: let us now mind the body; I shall think of the soul by-and-by.

Francis — It is your remorse, O King, 'tis that smarting wound inflicted by your crimes, which slowly drags your body to final ruin.

Louis — The priests absolved me.

Francis — Vain hope! The weight of your present alarms is made up of thirty years of iniquitous life. Confess your shame, disclose your sins, and let sincere repentance wash away your defiled soul.

Louis — Should I get cured?

Francis — Perhaps.

Louis — Say yes, promise that I shall. I am going to confess all.

Francis — To me?

Louis — Such is my will. Listen.

Francis [*seating himself whilst the King stands up with clasped hands*] — Speak then, sinner, who summon me to perform this holy ministry.

Louis [*after having recited mentally the* Confiteor] — I cannot and dare not refuse.

Francis — What are your sins?

Louis — Through fear of the Dauphin, the late King died of starvation.

Francis — A son shortened his own father's old age!

Louis — I was that Dauphin.

Francis — You were!

Louis — My father's weakness was ruining France. A favorite ruled. France must have perished had not the King done so. State interests are higher than —

Francis — Confess thy sins, thou wicked son; do not excuse thy wrong-doings.

Louis — I had a brother.

Francis — What of him?

Louis — Who died . . . . poisoned.

Francis—Were you instrumental in his death?

Louis—They suspected me.

Francis—God Almighty!

Louis—If those who said so fell in my power! . . .

Francis—Is it true?

Louis—His ghost rising from the grave can alone with impunity accuse me of his death.

Francis—So you were guilty of it?

Louis—The traitor deserved it!

Francis [*rising*]—You would escape your just punishment! Tremble! I was your brother, I am now your judge. Crushed under your sin, bend low your head. Return to nothingness, empty Majesty! I no longer see the King, I hear the criminal: to your knees, fratricide!

Louis [*falling on his knees*]—I shudder.

Francis—Repent!

Louis [*crawling to the monk and catching hold of his garments*]—I own my fault, have pity on me! I beat my breast and repent another crime. I do not excuse it.

Francis [*resuming his seat*]—Is this not all?

Louis—Nemours! . . . He was a conspirator. But his death . . . His crime was proved. But under his scaffold his children's tears . . . Thrice against his lord he had taken up arms. His life-blood spattered them. Yet his death was but just.

Francis—Cruel, cruel King!

Louis—Just, but severe; I confess it: I punished . . . but no, I have committed crimes. In mid-air the fatal knot has strangled my victims; in murderous pits they have been stabbed with steel; the waters have put an end to them, the earth has acted as their jailer. Prisoners buried beneath these towers groan forgotten in their depths.

Francis—Oh! since there are wrongs which you can still repair, come!

Louis—Where to?

Francis—Let us set free those prisoners.

Louis—Statecraft forbids.

Francis [*kneeling before the King*]—Charity orders: come, and save your soul.

Louis—And risk my crown! As a king, I cannot.

Francis—As a Christian, you must.

Louis — I have repented. Let that suffice.

Francis [*rising*] — That avails nothing.

Louis — Have I not confessed my sins?

Francis — They are not condoned while you persist in them.

Louis — The Church has indulgences which a king can pay for.

Francis — God's pardon is not to be bought: we must deserve it.

Louis [*in despair*] — I claim it by right of my anguish! O Father, if you knew my sufferings, you would shed tears of pity! The intolerable bodily pain I endure constitutes but half my troubles and my least suffering. I desire the places where I cannot be. Everywhere remorse pursues me; I avoid the living; I live among the dead. I spend dreadful days and nights more terrible. The darkness assumes visible shapes; silence disturbs me, and when I pray to my Savior I hear his voice say: «What would you with me, accursed?» When asleep, a demon sits on my chest: I drive him away, and a naked sword stabs me furiously; I rise aghast; human blood inundates my couch, and my hand, seized by a hand cold as death, is plunged in that blood and feels hideous moving débris. . . .

Francis — Ah, wretched man!

Louis — You shudder. Such are my days and nights; my sleep, my life. Yet, dying, I agonize to live, and fear to drink the last drop of that bitter cup.

Francis — Come then. Forgive the wrongs others have done you, and thus abate your own tortures. A deed of mercy will buy you rest, and when you awake, some voice at least will bless your name. Come. Do not tarry.

Louis — Wait! Wait!

Francis — Will the Lord wait?

Louis — To-morrow!

Francis — But to-morrow, to-night, now, perhaps, death awaits you.

Louis — I am well protected.

Francis — The unloved are ill protected. [*Tries to drag the King along.*] Come! Come!

Louis [*pushing him aside*]—Give me time, time to make up my mind.

Francis — I leave you, murderer. I cannot forgive your crimes.

Louis [*terrified*]—What! do you condemn me?

Francis—God may forgive all! When he still hesitates, how could I condemn? Take advantage of the delay he grants you; weep, pray, obtain from his mercy the softening of your heart towards those unfortunates. Forgive, and let the light of day shine for them once more. When you seized the attribute of Divine vengeance they denounced your name from the depth of their jails in their bitter anguish, and their shrieks and moans drowned your prayers. Now end those sufferings, and God shall hear your prayers.

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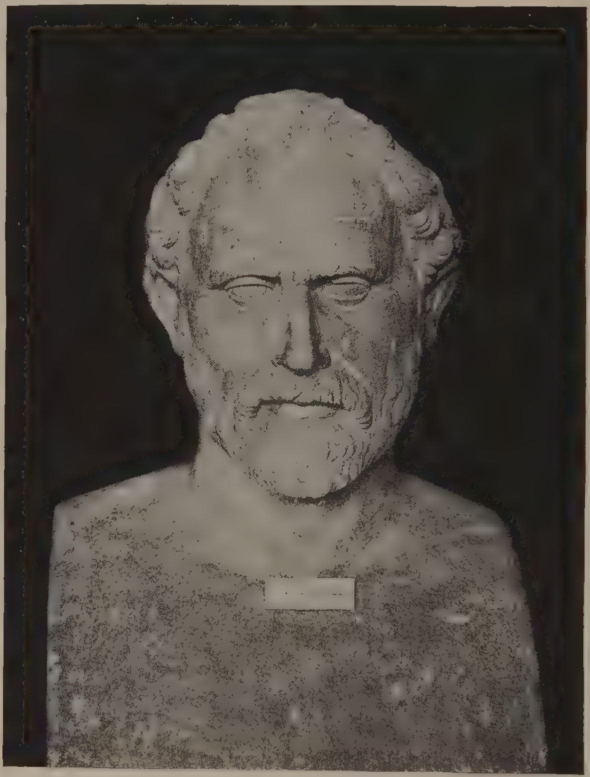


DEMOSTHENES

DEMOSTHENES

(384–322 B. C.)

BY ROBERT SHARP

The lot of Demosthenes, the great Athenian orator, was cast in evil times. The glorious days of his country's brilliant political pre-eminence among Grecian States, and of her still more brilliant pre-eminence as a leader and torch-bearer to the world in its progress towards enlightenment and freedom, were well-nigh over. In arms she had been crushed by the brute force of Sparta. But this was not her deepest humiliation; she had indeed risen again to great power, under the leadership of generals and statesmen in whom something of the old-time Athenian spirit still persisted; but the duration of that power had been brief. The deepest humiliation of a State is not in the loss of military prestige or of material resources, but in the degeneracy of its citizens, in the overthrow and scorn of high ideals; and so it was in Athens at the time of Demosthenes's political activity.

The Athenians had become a pampered, ease-loving people. They still cherished a cheap admiration for the great achievements of their fathers. Stirring appeals to the glories of Marathon and Salamis would arouse them to — pass patriotic resolutions. Any suggestion of self-sacrifice, of service on the fleet or in the field, was dangerous. A law made it a capital offense to propose to use, even in meeting any great emergency, the fund set aside to supply the folk with amusements. They preferred to hire mercenaries to undergo their hardships and to fight their battles; but they were not willing to pay their hirelings. The commander had to find pay for his soldiers in the booty taken from their enemies; or failing that, by plundering their friends. It must be admitted, however, that the patriots at home were always ready and most willing to try, to convict, and to punish the commanders upon any charge of misdemeanor in office.

There were not wanting men of integrity and true patriotism, and of great ability, as Isocrates and Phocion, who accepted as inevitable the decline of the power of Athens, and advocated a policy of passive non-interference in foreign affairs, unless it were to take part in a united effort against Persia. But the mass of the people, instead of offering their own means and their bodies to the service of their country, deemed it rather the part of the State to supply their needs and their amusements. They considered that they had performed, to the full, their duty as citizens when they had taken part in the noisy debates of the Assembly, or had sat as paid jurymen in the never-ending succession of court procedures of this most litigious of peoples. Among men even in their better days not callous to the allurements of bribes judiciously administered, it was a logical sequence that corruption should now pervade all classes and conditions.

Literature and art, too, shared the general decadence, as it ever must be, since they always respond to the dominant ideals of a time and a people. To this general statement the exception must be noted that philosophy, as represented by Plato and Aristotle, and oratory, as represented by a long succession of Attic orators, had developed into higher and better forms. The history of human experience has shown that philosophy often becomes more subtle and more profound in times when men fall away from their ancient high standards, and become shaken in their old beliefs. So oratory attains its perfect flower in periods of the greatest stress and danger, whether from foreign foes or from internal discord. Both these forms of utterance of the active human intellect show, in their highest attainment, the realization of imminent emergency and the effort to point out a way of betterment and safety.

Not only the condition of affairs at home was full of portent of coming disaster. The course of events in other parts of Greece and in the barbarian kingdom of Macedon seemed all to be converging to one inevitable result,— the extinction of Hellenic freedom. When a nation or a race becomes unfit to possess longer the most precious of heritages, a free and honorable place among nations, then the time and the occasion and the man will not be long wanting to co-operate with the internal subversive force in consummating the final catastrophe. «If Philip should die,» said Demosthenes, «the Athenians would quickly make themselves another Philip.»

Throughout Greece, mutual jealousy and hatred among the States, each too weak to cope with a strong foreign foe, prevented such united action as might have made the country secure from any barbarian power; and that at a time when it was threatened by an enemy far more formidable than had been Xerxes with all his millions.

The Greeks at first entirely underrated the danger from Philip and the Macedonians. They had, up to this time, despised these barbarians. Demosthenes, in the third Philippic, reproaches his countrymen with enduring insult and outrage from a vile barbarian out of Macedon, whence formerly not even a respectable slave could be obtained. It is indeed doubtful whether the world has ever seen a man, placed in a position of great power, more capable of seizing every opportunity and of using every agency, fair or foul, for accomplishing his ambitious purposes, than was Philip of Macedon. The Greeks were most unfortunate in their enemy.

Philip understood the Greek people thoroughly. He had received his early training among them while a hostage at Thebes. He found in their petty feuds, in their indolence and corruptibility, his opportunity to carry into effect his matured plans of conquest. His energy never slept; his influence was ever present. When he was far away, extending his boundaries among the barbarians, his money was still active in Athens and elsewhere. His agents, often among the ablest men in a community, were busy using every cunning means at the command of the wonderful Greek ingenuity to conceal the danger or to reconcile the fickle people to a change that promised fine rewards for the sale of their liberty. Then he began to trim off one by one the outlying colonies and dependencies of the Greek States. His next step was to be the obtaining of a foothold in Greece proper.

The chief obstacle to Philip's progress was Athens, degenerate as she was, and his chief opponent in Athens was Demosthenes. This Philip understood very well; but he treated both the city and the great statesman always with a remarkable leniency. More than once Athens, inflamed by Demosthenes, flashed into her old-time energy and activity, and stayed the Macedonian's course; as when, in his first bold march towards the heart of Greece, he found himself confronted at Thermopylæ by Athenian troops; and again when prompt succor from Athens saved Byzantium for the time. But the emergency once past, the ardor of the Athenians died down as quickly as it had flamed up.

The Social War (357–355 B. C.) left Athens stripped almost bare of allies, and was practically a victory for Philip. The Sacred War (357–346 B. C.) between Thebes and Phocis, turning upon an affront offered to the Delphian god, gave Philip the eagerly sought-for opportunity of interfering in the internal affairs of Greece. He became the successful champion of the god, and received as his reward a place in the great Amphictyonic Council. He thus secured recognition of his claims to being a Greek, since none but Greeks might sit in this council. He had, moreover, in crushing the Phocians, destroyed a formidable power of resistance to his plans.

Such were the times and such the conditions in which Demosthenes entered upon his strenuous public life. He was born most probably in 384 B. C., though some authorities give preference to 382 B. C. as the year of his birth. He was the son of Demosthenes and Cleobule. His father was a respectable and wealthy Athenian citizen, a manufacturer of cutlery and upholstering. His mother was the daughter of Gylon, an Athenian citizen resident in the region of the Crimea.

Misfortune fell early upon him. At the age of seven he was left fatherless. His large patrimony fell into the hands of unprincipled guardians. Nature seems almost maliciously to have concentrated in him a number of blemishes, any one of which might have checked effectually the ambition of any ordinary man to excel in the profession Demosthenes chose for himself. He was not strong of body, his features were sinister, and his manner was ungraceful,—a grievous drawback among a people with whom physical beauty might cover a multitude of sins, and physical imperfections were a reproach.

He seems to have enjoyed the best facilities in his youth for training his mind, though he complains that his teachers were not paid by his guardians; and he is reported to have developed a fondness for oratory at an early age. In his maturing years, he was taught by the great lawyer, Isæus; and must often have listened to the orator and rhetorician Isocrates, if he was not indeed actually instructed by him. When once he had determined to make himself an orator, he set himself to work with immense energy to overcome the natural disadvantages that stood in the way of his success. By hard training he strengthened his weak voice and lungs; it is related that he cured himself of a painful habit of stammering; and he subjected himself to the most vigorous course of study preparatory to his profession, cutting himself off from all social enjoyments.

His success as an orator, however, was not immediate. He tasted all the bitterness of failure on more than one occasion; but after temporary discouragement he redoubled his efforts to correct the faults that were made so distressingly plain to him by the unsparing but salutary criticism of his audience. Without doubt, these conflicts and rebuffs of his earlier years served to strengthen and deepen the moral character of Demosthenes, as well as to improve his art. They contributed to form a man capable of spending his whole life in unflagging devotion to a high purpose, and that in the face of the greatest difficulties and dangers. The dominant purpose of his life was the preservation of the freedom of the Greek States from the control of any foreign power, and the maintenance of the pre-eminent position of Athens among these States. In this combination of a splendid intellect, an indomitable will, and a great purpose, we find the true basis of Demosthenes's greatness.

When at the age of eighteen he came into the wreck of his patrimony, he at once began suit against Aphobos, one of his unfaithful guardians. He conducted his case himself. So well did he plead his cause that he received a verdict for a large amount. He seems, however, owing to the trickery of his opponent, never to have recovered the money. He became now a professional writer of speeches for clients in private suits of every kind, sometimes appearing in court himself as advocate.

In 355–354 B. C. he entered upon his career as public orator and statesman. He had now found his field of action, and till the end of his eventful life he was a most prominent figure in the great issues that concerned the welfare of Athens and of Greece. He was long unquestionably the leading man among the Athenians. By splendid ability as orator and statesman he was repeatedly able to thwart the plans of the traitors in the pay of Philip, even though they were led by the adept and eloquent Æschines. His influence was powerful in the Peloponnesus, and he succeeded, in 338 B. C., in even uniting the bitter hereditary enemies Thebes and Athens for one final, desperate, but unsuccessful struggle against the Macedonian power.

Demosthenes soon awoke to the danger threatening his country from the barbarian kingdom in the north, though not even he understood at first how grave was the danger. The series of great speeches relating to Philip — the First Philippic; the three Olynthiacs, ‘On the Peace,’ ‘On the Embassy,’ ‘On the Chersonese’; the Second and Third Philippics — show an increasing intensity and fire as the danger became more and more imminent. These orations were delivered in the period 351–341 B. C.

When the cause of Greek freedom had been overwhelmed at Chæronea, in the defeat of the allied Thebans and Athenians, Demosthenes, who had organized the unsuccessful resistance to Philip, still retained the favor of his countrymen, fickle as they were. With the exception of a short period of disfavor, he practically regulated the policy of Athens till his death in 322 B. C.

In 336 B. C., on motion of Ctesiphon, a golden crown was voted to Demosthenes by the Senate, in recognition of certain eminent services and generous contributions from his own means to the needs of the State. The decree was not confirmed by the Assembly, owing to the opposition of Æschines, who gave notice that he would bring suit against Ctesiphon for proposing an illegal measure. The case did not come up for trial, however, till 330 B. C., six years later. (The reason for this delay has never been clearly revealed.)

When Ctesiphon was summoned to appear, it was well understood that it was not he but Demosthenes who was in reality to be tried, and that the public and private record of the latter would be subjected to the most rigorous scrutiny. On that memorable occasion, people gathered from all over Greece to witness the oratorical duel of the two champions — for Demosthenes was to reply to Æschines. The speech of Æschines was a brilliant and bitter arraignment of Demosthenes; but so triumphant was the reply of the latter, that his opponent, in mortification, went into voluntary exile. The speech of Demosthenes 'On the Crown' has been generally accepted by ancients and moderns as the supreme attainment in the oratory of antiquity.

It is evident that a man the never-swerving champion of a cause which demanded the greatest sacrifice from a people devoted to self-indulgence, the never-sleeping opponent of the hirelings of a foreign enemy, and a persistent obstacle to men of honest conviction who advocated a policy different from that which seemed best to him, would of necessity bring upon himself bitter hostility and accusations of the most serious character. And such was the case. Demosthenes has been accused of many crimes and immoralities, some of them so different in character as to be almost mutually exclusive. The most serious charge is that of receiving a bribe from Harpalus, the absconding treasurer of Alexander. He was tried upon this charge, convicted, fined fifty talents, and thrown into prison. Thence he escaped to go into a miserable exile.

How far and how seriously the character of Demosthenes is compromised by this and other attacks, it is not possible to decide to the satisfaction of all. The results of the contest in regard to the crown and the trial in the Harpalus matter were very different; but the verdict of neither trial, even if they were not conflicting, could be accepted as decisive. To me, the evidence,—weighed as we weigh other evidence, with a just appreciation of the source of the charges, the powerful testimony of the man's public life viewed as a whole, and the lofty position maintained in the face of all odds among a petulant people whom he would not flatter, but openly reproved for their vices,—the evidence, I say, read in this light justifies the conclusion that the orator was a man of high moral character, and that in the Harpalus affair he was the victim of the Macedonian faction and of the misled patriotic party, co-operating for the time being.

When the tidings of the death of Alexander startled the world, Demosthenes at once, though in exile, became intensely active in arousing the patriots to strike one more blow for liberty. He was recalled to Athens, restored to his high place, and became again the chief influence in preparing for the last desperate resistance to the Macedonians. When the cause of Greek freedom was finally lost, Demosthenes went into exile; a price was set upon his head; and when the Macedonian soldiers, led by a Greek traitor, were about to lay hands upon him in the temple of Poseidon at Calauria, he sucked the poison which he always carried ready in his pen, and died rather than yield himself to the hated enemies of his country.

It remains only to say that the general consensus of ancient and modern opinion is, that Demosthenes was the supreme figure in the brilliant line of orators of antiquity. The chief general characteristics in all Demosthenes's public oratory are a sustained intensity and a merciless directness. Swift as waves before a gale, every word bears straight toward the final goal of his purpose. We are hardly conscious even of the artistic taste which fits each phrase, and sentence, and episode, to the larger occasion as well as to each other. Indeed, we lose the rhetorician altogether in the devoted pleader, the patriot, the self-forgetful chief of a noble but losing cause. His careful study of the great orators who had preceded him undoubtedly taught him much; yet it was his own original and creative power, lodged in a far-sighted, generous, and fearless nature, that enabled him to leave to mankind a series of forensic masterpieces hardly rivaled in any age or country.

Robert Sharp

THE THIRD PHILIPPIC

THE ARGUMENT

This speech was delivered about three months after the second Philippic, while Philip was advancing into Thrace, and threatening both the Chersonese and the Propontine coast. No new event had happened which called for any special consultation; but Demosthenes, alarmed by the formidable character of Philip's enterprises and vast military preparations, felt the necessity of rousing the Athenians to exertion.

MANY speeches, men of Athens, are made in almost every Assembly about the hostilities of Philip, hostilities which ever since the treaty of peace he has been committing as well against you as against the rest of the Greeks; and all, I am sure, are ready to avow, though they forbear to do so, that our counsels and our measures should be directed to his humiliation and chastisement: nevertheless, so low have our affairs been brought by inattention and negligence, I fear it is harsh truth to say, that if all the orators had sought to suggest and you to pass resolutions for the utter ruining of the commonwealth, we could not methinks be worse off than we are. A variety of circumstances may have brought us to this state; our affairs have not declined from one or two causes only: but if you rightly examine, you will find it chiefly owing to the orators, who study to please you rather than advise for the best. Some of whom, Athenians, seeking to maintain the basis of their own power and repute, have no forethought for the future, and therefore think you also ought to have none; others, accusing and calumniating practical statesmen, labor only to make Athens punish Athens, and in such occupation to engage her that Philip may have liberty to say and do what he pleases. Politics of this kind are common here, but are the causes of your failures and embarrassment. I beg, Athenians, that you will not resent my plain speaking of the truth. Only consider. You hold liberty of speech in other matters to be the general right of all residents in Athens, insomuch that you allow a measure of it even to foreigners and slaves, and many servants may be seen among you speaking their thoughts more freely than citizens in some other States; and yet you have altogether banished it from your councils. The result has been, that in the Assembly you give yourselves airs and are flattered at hearing nothing but compliments; in your measures and proceedings you are brought to the utmost peril. If such be your disposition now, I must be silent: if you will listen to good advice without flattery, I am ready to speak. For though our affairs are in a deplorable condition, though many sacrifices have been made, still if you will choose to perform your duty it is possible to repair it all. A paradox, and yet a truth, am I about to state. That which is the most lamentable in the past is best for the future. How is this? Because you performed no part of your duty, great or small, and therefore you fared ill: had you done all that became you, and your situation were the same, there would be no hope of amendment. Philip has indeed prevailed over your sloth and negligence, but not over the country; you have not been worsted; you have not even bestirred yourselves.

If now we were all agreed that Philip is at war with Athens and infringing the peace, nothing would a speaker need to urge or advise but the safest and easiest way of resisting him. But since, at the very time when Philip is capturing cities and retaining divers of our dominions and assailing all people, there are men so unreasonable as to listen to repeated declarations in the Assembly that some of us are kindling war, one must be cautious and set this matter right: for whoever moves or advises a measure of defense is in danger of being accused afterwards as author of the war.

I will first then examine and determine this point, whether it be in our power to deliberate on peace or war. If the country may be at peace, if it depends on us (to begin with this), I say we ought to maintain peace; and I call upon the affirmant to move a resolution, to take some measure, and not to palter with us. But if another, having arms in his hand and a large force around him, amuses you with the name of peace while he carries on the operations of war, what is left but to defend yourselves? You may profess to be at peace if you like, as he does; I quarrel not with that. But if any man supposes this to be a peace, which will enable Philip to master all else and attack you last, he is a madman, or he talks of a peace observed towards him by you, not towards you by him. This it is that Philip purchases by all his expenditure — the privilege of assailing you without being assailed in turn.

If we really wait until he avows that he is at war with us, we are the simplest of mortals: for he would not declare that, though he marched even against Attica and Piræus; at least if we may judge from his conduct to others. For example, to the Olynthians he declared when he was forty furlongs from their city, that there was no alternative, but either they must quit Olynthus or he Macedonia; though before that time, whenever he was accused of such an intent, he took it ill and sent ambassadors to justify himself. Again, he marched toward the Phocians as if they were allies, and there were Phocian envoys who accompanied his march, and many among you contended that his advance would not benefit the Thebans. And he came into Thessaly of late as a friend and ally, yet he has taken possession of Pheræ; and lastly he told these wretched people of Oreus that he had sent his soldiers out of good-will to visit them, as he heard they were in trouble and dissension, and it was the part of allies and true friends to lend assistance on such occasions. People who would never have harmed him, though they might have adopted measures of defense, he chose to deceive rather than warn them of his attack; and think ye he would declare war against you before he began it, and that while you are willing to be deceived? Impossible. He would be the silliest of mankind, if whilst you the injured parties make no complaint against him, but are accusing your own countrymen, he should terminate your intestine strife and jealousies, warn you to turn against him, and remove the pretexts of his hirelings for asserting, to amuse you, that he makes no war upon Athens. O heavens! would any rational being judge by words rather than by actions, who is at peace with him and who at war? Surely none. Well then, tell me now: when he sends mercenaries into Chersonesus, which the king and all the Greeks have acknowledged to be yours, when he avows himself an auxiliary and writes us word so, what are such proceedings? He says he is not at war; I cannot however admit such conduct to be an observance of the peace; far otherwise: I say, by his attempt on Megara, by his setting up despotism in Eubœa, by his present advance into Thrace, by his intrigues in Peloponnesus, by the whole course of operations with his army, he has been breaking the peace and making war upon you; unless indeed you will say that those who establish batteries are not at war until they apply them to the walls. But that you will not say: for whoever contrives and prepares the means for my conquest, is at war with me before he darts or draws the bow. What, if anything should happen, is the risk you run? The alienation of the Hellespont, the subjection of Megara and Eubœa to your enemy, the siding of the Peloponnesians with him. Then can I allow that one who sets such an engine at work against Athens is at peace with her? Quite the contrary. From the day that he destroyed the Phocians I date his commencement of hostilities. Defend yourselves instantly, and I say you will be wise: delay it, and you may wish in vain to do so hereafter. So much do I dissent from your other counselors, men of Athens, that I deem any discussion about Chersonesus or Byzantium out of place. Succor them,—I advise that,—watch that no harm befalls them, send all necessary supplies to your troops in that quarter; but let your deliberations be for the safety of all Greece, as being in the utmost peril. I must tell you why I am so alarmed at the state of our affairs, that if my reasonings are correct, you may share them, and make some provision at least for yourselves, however disinclined to do so for others; but if in your judgment I talk nonsense and absurdity, you may treat me as crazed, and not listen to me either now or in future.

That Philip from a mean and humble origin has grown mighty, that the Greeks are jealous and quarreling among themselves, that it was far more wonderful for him to rise from that insignificance than it would now be, after so many acquisitions, to conquer what is left: these, and similar matters which I might dwell upon, I pass over. But I observe that all people, beginning with you, have conceded to him a right which in former times has been the subject of contest in every Grecian war. And what is this? The right of doing what he pleases, openly fleecing and pillaging the Greeks, one after another, attacking and enslaving their cities. You were at the head of the Greeks for seventy-three years, the Lacedæmonians for twenty-nine; and the Thebans had some power in these latter times after the battle of Leuctra. Yet neither you my countrymen, nor Thebans, nor Lacedæmonians, were ever licensed by the Greeks to act as you pleased; far otherwise. When you, or rather the Athenians of that time, appeared to be dealing harshly with certain people, all the rest, even such as had no complaint against Athens, thought proper to side with the injured parties in a war against her. So, when the Lacedæmonians became masters and succeeded to your empire, on their attempting to encroach and make oppressive innovations a general war was declared against them, even by such as had no cause of complaint. But wherefore mention other people? We ourselves and the Lacedæmonians, although at the outset we could not allege any mutual injuries, thought proper to make war for the injustice that we saw done to our neighbors. Yet all the faults committed by the Spartans in those thirty years, and by our ancestors in the seventy, are less, men of Athens, than the wrongs which in thirteen incomplete years that Philip has been uppermost he has inflicted on the Greeks: nay, they are scarcely a fraction of these, as may easily be shown in a few words. Olynthus and Methone and Apollonia, and thirty-two cities on the borders of Thrace, I pass over; all which he has so cruelly destroyed, that a visitor could hardly tell if they were ever inhabited; and of the Phocians, so considerable a people exterminated, I say nothing. But what is the condition of Thessaly? Has he not taken away her constitutions and her cities, and established tetrarchies, to parcel her out, not only by cities, but also by provinces, for subjection? Are not the Eubœan States governed now by despots, and that in an island near to Thebes and Athens? Does he not expressly write in his epistles, «I am at peace with those who are willing to obey me?» Nor does he write so and not act accordingly. He is gone to the Hellespont; he marched formerly against Ambracia; Elis, such an important city in Peloponnesus, he possesses; he plotted lately to get Megara: neither Hellenic nor barbaric land contains the man's ambition.

And we the Greek community, seeing and hearing this, instead of sending embassies to one another about it and expressing indignation, are in such a miserable state, so intrenched in our separate towns, that to this day we can attempt nothing that interest or necessity requires; we cannot combine, or form any association for succor and alliance; we look unconcernedly on the man's growing power, each resolving, methinks, to enjoy the interval that another is destroyed in, not caring or striving for the salvation of Greece: for none can be ignorant that Philip, like some course or attack of fever or other disease, is coming even on those that yet seem very far removed. And you must be sensible that whatever wrong the Greeks sustained from Lacedæmonians or from us was at least inflicted by genuine people of Greece; and it might be felt in the same manner as if a lawful son, born to a large fortune, committed some fault or error in the management of it; on that ground one would consider him open to censure and reproach, yet it could not be said that he was an alien, and not heir to the property which he so dealt with. But if a slave or a spurious child wasted and spoiled what he had no interest in — Heavens! how much more heinous and hateful would all have pronounced it! And yet in regard to Philip and his conduct they feel not this, although he is not only no Greek and no way akin to Greeks, but not even a barbarian of a place honorable to mention; in fact, a vile fellow of Macedon, from which a respectable slave could not be purchased formerly.

What is wanting to make his insolence complete? Besides his destruction of Grecian cities, does he not hold the Pythian games, the common festival of Greece, and if he comes not himself, send his vassals to preside? Is he not master of Thermopylæ and the passes into Greece, and holds he not those places by garrisons and mercenaries? Has he not thrust aside Thessalians, ourselves, Dorians, the whole Amphictyonic body, and got pre-audience of the oracle, to which even the Greeks do not all pretend? Yet the Greeks endure to see all this; methinks they view it as they would a hailstorm, each praying that it may not fall on himself, none trying to prevent it. And not only are the outrages which he does to Greece submitted to, but even the private wrongs of every people: nothing can go beyond this! Still under these indignities we are all slack and disheartened, and look towards our neighbors, distrusting one another instead of the common enemy. And how think ye a man who behaves so insolently to all, how will he act when he gets each separately under his control?

But what has caused the mischief? There must be some cause, some good reason why the Greeks were so eager for liberty then, and now are eager for servitude. There was something, men of Athens, something in the hearts of the multitude then which there is not now, which overcame the wealth of Persia and maintained the freedom of Greece, and quailed not under any battle by land or sea; the loss whereof has ruined all, and thrown the affairs of Greece into confusion. What was this? Nothing subtle or clever: simply that whoever took money from the aspirants for power or the corrupters of Greece were universally detested; it was dreadful to be convicted of bribery; the severest punishment was inflicted on the guilty, and there was no intercession or pardon. The favorable moments for enterprise which fortune frequently offers to the careless against the vigilant, to them that will do nothing against those that discharge all their duty, could not be bought from orators or generals; no more could mutual concord, nor distrust of tyrants and barbarians, nor anything of the kind. But now all such principles have been sold as in open market, and those imported in exchange, by which Greece is ruined and diseased. What are they? Envy where a man gets a bribe; laughter if he confesses it; mercy to the convicted; hatred of those that denounce the crime; all the usual attendants upon corruption. For as to ships and men and revenues and abundance of other materials, all that may be reckoned as constituting national strength — assuredly the Greeks of our day are more fully and perfectly supplied with such advantages than Greeks of the olden time. But they are all rendered useless, unavailable, unprofitable, by the agency of these traffickers.

That such is the present state of things, you must see without requiring my testimony; that it was different in former times I will demonstrate, not by speaking my own words, but by showing an inscription of your ancestors, which they graved on a brazen column and deposited in the citadel, not for their own benefit (they were right-minded enough without such records), but for a memorial and example to instruct you how seriously such conduct should be taken up. What says the inscription then? It says:—«Let Arthmius, son of Pythonax the Zelite, be declared an outlaw and an enemy of the Athenian people and their allies, him and his family.» Then the cause is written why this was done: because he brought the Median gold into Peloponnesus. That is the inscription. By the gods! only consider and reflect among yourselves what must have been the spirit, what the dignity of those Athenians who acted so. One Arthmius a Zelite, subject of the king (for Zelea is in Asia), because in his master's service he brought gold into Peloponnesus,—not to Athens,—they proclaimed an enemy of the Athenians and their allies, him and his family, and outlawed. That is not by the outlawry commonly spoken of; for what would a Zelite care, to be excluded from Athenian franchises? It means not that; but in the statutes of homicide it is written, in cases where a prosecution for murder is not allowed, but killing is sanctioned, «and let him die an outlaw,» says the legislator; by which he means that whoever kills such a person shall be unpolluted. Therefore they considered that the preservation of all Greece was their own concern (but for such opinion, they would not have cared whether people in Peloponnesus were bought and corrupted); and whomsoever they discovered taking bribes, they chastised and punished so severely as to record their names in brass. The natural result was, that Greece was formidable to the barbarian, not the barbarian to Greece. 'Tis not so now: since neither in this nor in other respects are your sentiments the same. But what are they? You know yourselves; why am I to upbraid you with everything? The Greeks in general are alike, and no better than you. Therefore I say, our present affairs demand earnest attention and wholesome counsel.

There is a foolish saying of persons who wish to make us easy, that Philip is not yet as powerful as the Lacedæmonians were formerly, who ruled everywhere by land and sea, and had the king for their ally, and nothing withstood them; yet Athens resisted even that nation, and was not destroyed. I myself believe that while everything has received great improvement, and the present bears no resemblance to the past, nothing has been so changed and improved as the practice of war. For anciently, as I am informed, the Lacedæmonians and all Grecian people would for four or five months during the season, only, invade and ravage the land of their enemies with heavy-armed and national troops, and return home again; and their ideas were so old-fashioned, or rather national, that they never purchased an advantage from any; theirs was a legitimate and open warfare. But now you doubtless perceive that the majority of disasters have been effected by treason; nothing is done in fair field or combat. You hear of Philip marching where he pleases, not because he commands troops of the line, but because he has attached to him a host of skirmishers, cavalry, archers, mercenaries, and the like. When with these he falls upon a people in civil dissension, and none (through mistrust) will march out to defend the country, he applies engines and besieges them. I need not mention that he makes no difference between winter and summer, that he has no stated season of repose. You, knowing these things, reflecting on them, must not let the war approach your territories, nor get your necks broken, relying on the simplicity of the old war with the Lacedæmonians; but take the longest time beforehand for defensive measures and preparations, see that he stirs not from home, avoid any decisive engagement. For a war, if we choose, men of Athens, to pursue a right course, we have many natural advantages; such as the position of his kingdom, which we may extensively plunder and ravage, and a thousand more; but for a battle he is better trained than we are.

Nor is it enough to adopt these resolutions and oppose him by warlike measures: you must on calculation and on principle abhor his advocates here, remembering that it is impossible to overcome your enemies abroad until you have chastised those who are his ministers within the city. Which, by Jupiter and all the gods, you cannot and will not do! You have arrived at such a pitch of folly or madness or — I know not what to call it: I am tempted often to think that some evil genius is driving you to ruin — that for the sake of scandal or envy or jest or any other cause, you command hirelings to speak (some of whom would not deny themselves to be hirelings), and laugh when they abuse people. And this, bad as it is, is not the worst; you have allowed these persons more liberty for their political conduct than your faithful counselors; and see what evils are caused by listening to such men with indulgence. I will mention facts that you will all remember.

In Olynthus some of the statesmen were in Philip's interest, doing everything for him; some were on the honest side, aiming to preserve their fellow-citizens from slavery. Which party, now, destroyed their country? or which betrayed the cavalry, by whose betrayal Olynthus fell? The creatures of Philip; they that, while the city stood, slandered and calumniated the honest counselors so effectually that the Olynthian people were induced to banish Apollonides.

Nor is it there only, and nowhere else, that such practice has been ruinous.

What can be the reason — perhaps you wonder — why the Olynthians were more indulgent to Philip's advocates than to their own? The same which operates with you. They who advise for the best cannot always gratify their audience, though they would; for the safety of the State must be attended to; their opponents by the very counsel which is agreeable advance Philip's interest. One party required contribution, the other said there was no necessity; one were for war and mistrust, the other for peace, until they were ensnared. And so on for everything else (not to dwell on particulars); the one made speeches to please for the moment, and gave no annoyance; the other offered salutary counsel that was offensive. Many rights did the people surrender at last, not from any such motive of indulgence or ignorance, but submitting in the belief that all was lost. Which, by Jupiter and Apollo, I fear will be your case, when on calculation you see that nothing can be done. I pray, men of Athens, it may never come to this! Better die a thousand deaths than render homage to Philip, or sacrifice any of your faithful counselors. A fine recompense have the people of Oreus got, for trusting themselves to Philip's friends and spurning Euphræus! Finely are the Eretrian commons rewarded, for having driven away your ambassadors and yielded to Clitarchus! Yes; they are slaves, exposed to the lash and the torture. Finely he spared the Olynthians! It is folly and cowardice to cherish such hopes, and while you take evil counsel and shirk every duty, and even listen to those who plead for your enemies, to think you inhabit a city of such magnitude that you cannot suffer any serious misfortune. Yea, and it is disgraceful to exclaim on any occurrence, when it is too late, "Who would have expected it? However — this or that should have been done, the other left undone." Many things could the Olynthians mention now, which if foreseen at the time would have prevented their destruction. Many could the Orites mention, many the Phocians, and each of the ruined States. But what would it avail them? As long as the vessel is safe, whether it be great or small, the mariner, the pilot, every man in turn should exert himself, and prevent its being overturned either by accident or design: but when the sea hath rolled over it, their efforts are vain. And we likewise, O Athenians, whilst we are safe, with a magnificent city, plentiful resources, lofty reputation—what must we do? Many of you, I dare say, have been longing to ask. Well then, I will tell you; I will move a resolution; pass it, if you please.

First, let us prepare for our own defense; provide ourselves, I mean, with ships, money, and troops—for surely, though all other people consented to be slaves, we at least ought to struggle for freedom. When we have completed our own preparations and made them apparent to the Greeks, then let us invite the rest, and send our ambassadors everywhere with the intelligence, to Peloponnesus, to Rhodes, to Chios, to the king, I say (for it concerns his interests not to let Philip make universal conquest); that, if you prevail, you may have partners of your dangers and expenses in case of necessity, or at all events that you may delay the operations. For since the war is against an individual, not against the collected power of a State, even this may be useful; as were the embassies last year to Peloponnesus, and the remonstrances with which I and the other envoys went round and arrested Philip's progress, so that he neither attacked Ambracia nor started for Peloponnesus. I say not, however, that you should invite the rest without adopting measures to protect yourselves; it would be folly, while you sacrifice your own interest, to profess a regard for that of strangers, or to alarm others about the future, whilst for the present you are unconcerned. I advise not this; I bid you send supplies to the troops in Chersonesus, and do what else they require; prepare yourselves and make every effort first, then summon, gather, instruct the rest of the Greeks. That is the duty of a State possessing a dignity such as yours. If you imagine that Chalcidians or Megarians will save Greece, while you run away from the contest, you imagine wrong. Well for any of those people if they are safe themselves! This work belongs to you; this privilege your ancestors bequeathed to you, the prize of many perilous exertions. But if every one will sit seeking his pleasure, and studying to be idle himself, never will he find others to do his work; and more than this, I fear we shall be under the necessity of doing all that we like not at one time. Were proxies to be had, our inactivity would have found them long ago; but they are not.

Such are the measures which I advise, which I propose; adopt them, and even yet, I believe, our prosperity may be re-established. If any man has better advice to offer, let him communicate it openly. Whatever you determine, I pray to all the gods for a happy result.

Translation of Charles R. Kennedy.

INVECTIVE AGAINST LICENSE OF SPEECH

This, you must be convinced, is a struggle for existence. You cannot overcome your enemies abroad till you have punished your enemies, his ministers, at home. They will be the stumbling-blocks which prevent you reaching the others. Why, do you suppose, Philip now insults you? To other people he at least renders services though he deceives them, while he is already threatening you. Look for instance at the Thessalians. It was by many benefits conferred on them that he seduced them into their present bondage. And then the Olynthians, again,—how he cheated them, first giving them Potidæa and several other places, is really beyond description. Now he is enticing the Thebans by giving up to them Bœotia, and delivering them from a toilsome and vexatious war. Each of these people did get a certain advantage; but some of them have suffered what all the world knows; others will suffer whatever may hereafter befall them. As for you, I recount not all that has been taken from you, but how shamefully have you been treated and despoiled! Why is it that Philip deals so differently with you and with others? Because yours is the only State in Greece in which the privilege is allowed of speaking for the enemy, and a citizen taking a bribe may safely address the Assembly, though you have been robbed of your dominions. It was not safe at Olynthus to be Philip's advocate, unless the Olynthian commonalty had shared the advantage by possession of Potidæa. It was not safe in Thessaly to be Philip's advocate, unless the people of Thessaly had secured the advantage by Philip's expelling their tyrants and restoring the Synod at Pylæ. It was not safe in Thebes, until he gave up Bœotia to them and destroyed the Phocians. Yet at Athens, though Philip has deprived you of Amphipolis and the territory round Cardia—nay, is making Eubœa a fortress as a check upon us, and is advancing to attack Byzantium—it is safe to speak in Philip's behalf.

JUSTIFICATION OF HIS PATRIOTIC POLICY

Do not go about repeating that Greece owes all her misfortunes to one man. No, not to one man, but to many abandoned men distributed throughout the different States, of whom, by earth and heaven, Æschines is one. If the truth were to be spoken without reserve, I should not hesitate to call him the common scourge of all the men, the districts, and the cities which have perished; for the sower of the seed is answerable for the crop. . . .

I affirm that if the future had been apparent to us all,—if you, Æschines, had foretold it and proclaimed it at the top of your voice instead of preserving total silence,—nevertheless the State ought not to have deviated from her course, if she had regard to her own honor, the traditions of the past, or the judgment of posterity. As it is, she is looked upon as having failed in her policy,—the common lot of all mankind when such is the will of heaven; but if, claiming to be the foremost State of Greece, she had deserted her post, she would have incurred the reproach of betraying Greece to Philip. If we had abandoned without a struggle all which our forefathers braved every danger to win, who would not have spurned you, Æschines? How could we have looked in the face the strangers who flock to our city, if things had reached their present pass,—Philip the chosen leader and lord of all,—while others without our assistance had borne the struggle to avert this consummation? We! who have never in times past preferred inglorious safety to peril in the path of honor. Is there a Greek or a barbarian who does not know that Thebes at the height of her power, and Sparta before her—ay, and even the King of Persia himself—would have been only glad to compromise with us, and that we might have had what we chose, and possessed our own in peace, had we been willing to obey orders and to suffer another to put himself at the head of Greece? But it was not possible,—it was not a thing which the Athenians of those days could do. It was against their nature, their genius, and their traditions; and no human persuasion could induce them to side with a wrong-doer because he was powerful, and to embrace subjection because it was safe. No; to the last our country has fought and jeopardized herself for honor and glory and pre-eminence. A noble choice, in harmony with your national character, as you testify by your respect for the memories of your ancestors who have so acted. And you are in the right; for who can withhold admiration from the heroism of the men who shrank not from leaving their city and their fatherland, and embarking in their war-ships, rather than submit to foreign dictation? Why, Themistocles, who counseled this step, was elected general; and the man who counseled submission was stoned to death — and not he only, for his wife was stoned by your wives, as he was by you. The Athenians of those days went not in quest of an orator or a general who could help them to prosperous slavery; but they scorned life itself, if it were not the life of freedom. Each of them regarded himself as the child not only of his father and of his mother, but of his country; and what is the difference? He who looks on himself as merely the child of his parents, awaits death in the ordinary course of nature; while he who looks on himself as the child also of his country, will be ready to lay down his life rather than see her enslaved. . . .

Do I take credit to myself for having inspired you with sentiments worthy of your ancestors? Such presumption would expose me to the just rebuke of every man who hears me. What I maintain is, that these very sentiments are your own; that the spirit of Athens was the same before my time,— though I do claim to have had a share in the application of these principles to each successive crisis. Æschines, therefore, when he impeaches our whole policy, and seeks to exasperate you against me as the author of all your alarms and perils, in his anxiety to deprive me of present credit is really laboring to rob you of your everlasting renown. If by your vote against Ctesiphon you condemn my policy, you will pronounce yourselves to have been in the wrong, instead of having suffered what has befallen you through the cruel injustice of fortune. But it cannot be; you have not been in the wrong, men of Athens, in doing battle for the freedom and salvation of all: I swear it by your forefathers, who bore the battle's brunt at Marathon; by those who stood in arms at Platæa; by those who fought the sea fight at Salamis; by the heroes of Artemisium, and many more whose resting-place in our national monuments attests that, that as our country buried, so she honored, all alike — victors and vanquished. She was right; for what brave men could do, all did, though a higher power was master of their fate.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

(1785–1859)

BY GEORGE R. CARPENTER

De Quincey's popular reputation is largely due to his autobiographical essays,—to his 'Confessions.' Whatever may be the merits of his other writings, the general public, as in the case of Rousseau, of Dante, of St. Augustine, and of many another, has, with its instinctive and unquenchable desire for knowledge of the inner life of men of great emotional and imaginative power, singled out De Quincey's 'Confessions' as the most significant of his works. There has arisen a popular legend of De Quincey, making him (not unlike Dante, who had seen hell with his bodily eyes) a man who had felt in his own person the infernal pangs and pleasures consequent upon enormous and almost unique excesses in the use of that Oriental drug which possesses for us all such a romantic attraction. He became the «English Opium-Eater»; and even the most recent and authoritative edition of his writings, that of the late Professor Masson, did not hesitate in advertisements to avail itself of a title so familiar and so sensational.

To a great degree, this feeling on the part of the public is natural and proper. De Quincey's opium habit, begun in his youth under circumstances that modern physicians have guessed to be justifiable, and continued throughout the remainder of his life,—at first without self-restraint, at last in what was for him moderation,—has rendered him a striking and isolated figure in Western lands.

We have a right eagerly to ask: On this strongly marked temperament, so delicately imaginative and so keenly logical, so receptive and so retentive, a type alike of the philosopher and the poet, the scholar and the musician—on such a contemplative genius, what were the effects of so great and so constant indulgence in a drug noted for its power of heightening and extending, for a season, the whole range of the imaginative faculties?

Justifiable as such feelings may be, however, they tend to wrong De Quincey's memory and to limit our conceptions of his character and genius. He was no vulgar opium drunkard; he was, to all appearances, singularly free even from the petty vices to which eaters of the drug are supposed to be peculiarly liable. To be sure, he was not without his eccentricities. He was absent-mindedly careless in his attire, unusual in his hours of waking and sleeping, odd in his habits of work, ludicrously ignorant of the value of money, solitary, prone to whims, by turns reticent and loquacious. But for all his eccentricities, De Quincey — unlike Poe, for example — is not a possible object for pity or patronage; they would be foolish who could doubt his word or mistrust his motives. He was «queer,» as most great Englishmen of letters of his time were; but the more his at first enigmatic character comes to light, through his own letters and through the recollections of his friends, the more clearly do we see him to have been a pure-minded and well-bred man, kind, honest, generous, and gentle. His life was almost wholly passed among books,— books in many languages, books of many kinds and times. These he incessantly read and annotated. And the treasures of this wide reading, stored in a retentive and imaginative mind, form the basis of almost all his work that is not distinctly autobiographical.

De Quincey's writings, as collected by himself (and more recently by Professor Masson), fill fourteen good-sized volumes, and consist of about two hundred and fifteen separate pieces, all of which were contributed to various periodicals between 1813, when at the age of thirty-eight he suddenly found himself and his family dependent for support on his literary efforts, to his death in 1859. Books, sustained efforts of construction, he did not except in a single instance, and probably could not, produce; his mind held rich stores of information on many subjects, but his habit of thought was essentially non-consecutive and his method merely that of the brilliant talker, who illumines delightfully many a subject, treating none, however, with reserved power and thorough care. His attitude toward his work, it is worth while to notice, was an admirable one. His task was often that of a hack writer; his spirit never. His life was frugal and modest in the extreme; and though writing brought him bread and fame, he seems never, in any recorded instance, to have concerned himself with its commercial value. He wrote from a full mind and with genuine inspiration, and lived and died a man of letters from pure love of letters and not of worldly gain.

As we have noticed, it is the autobiographical part of De Quincey's writing — the ‹Confessions› of one who could call every day for «a glass of laudanum negus, warm, and without sugar»— that has made him famous, and which deserves first our critical attention. It consists of four or five hundred pages of somewhat disconnected sketches, including the ‹Confessions of an English Opium-Eater› and ‹Suspiria de Profundis.› De Quincey himself speaks of them as «a far higher class of composition» than his philosophical or historical writings,— declaring them to be, unlike the comparatively matter-of-fact memoirs of Rousseau and St. Augustine, «modes of impassioned prose, ranging under no precedents that I am aware of in any literature.» What De Quincey attempted was to clothe in words scenes from the world of dreams,—a lyric fashion, as it were, wholly in keeping with contemporary taste and aspiration, which under the penetrating influence of romanticism were maintaining the poetical value and interest of isolated and excited personal feeling.

Like Dante, whose 'Vita Nuova' De Quincey's 'Confessions' greatly resemble in their essential characteristics of method, he had lived from childhood in a world of dreams. Both felt keenly the pleasures and sorrows of the outer world, but in both contemplative imagination was so strong that the actual fact—the real Beatrice, if you will—became as nothing to that same fact transmuted through idealizing thought. De Quincey was early impressed by the remarkable fashion in which dreams or reveries weave together the separate strands of wakeful existence. Before he was two years old he had, he says, «a remarkable dream of terrific grandeur about a favorite nurse, which is interesting to myself for this reason,—that it demonstrates my dreaming tendencies to have been constitutional, and not dependent on laudanum.» At the same age he «connected a profound sense of pathos with the reappearance, very early in the spring, of some crocuses.» These two incidents are a key to the working of De Quincey's mind. Waking or sleeping, his intellect had the rare power of using the facts of life as the composer might use a song of the street, building on a wandering ballad a whole symphony of transfigured sound, retaining skillfully, in the midst of the new and majestic music, the winning qualities of the popular strain. To such a boy, with an imaginative mind, an impassioned nature, and a memory which retained and developed powerfully year by year all associations involving the feelings of grandeur, magnificence, or immensity,—to such a boy, life and experience were but the storing up of material which the creative mind might weave into literature that had the form of prose and the nature of poetry.

De Quincey shared Dante's rare capacity for retaining strong visual images, his rare power of weaving them into a new and wonderful fabric. But De Quincey, though as learned and as acute as Dante, had not Dante's religious and philosophical convictions. A blind faith and scholastic reason were the foundations of the great vision of the 'Divine Comedy.' De Quincey had not the strong but limited conception of the world on which to base his imagination, he had not the high religious vision to nerve him to higher contemplation, and his work can never serve in any way as a guide and message to mankind. De Quincey's visions, however, have the merit of not being forced. He did not resolve to see what faith and reason bade him.

While all controlled reasoning was suspended under the incantation of opium, his quick mind, without conscious intent, without prejudice or purpose, assembled such mysterious and wonderful sights and sounds as the naked soul might see and hear in the world of actual experience. For De Quincey's range of action and association was not as narrow as might seem. He had walked the streets of London friendless and starving, saved from death by a dram given by one even more wretched than he, only a few months after he had talked with the king. De Quincey's latent images are therefore not grotesque or mediæval, not conditioned by any philosophical theory, not of any Inferno or Paradise. The elements of his visions are the simple elements of all our striking experiences: the faces of the dead, the grieving child, the tired woman, the strange foreign face, the tramp of horses' feet. And opium merely magnified these simple elements, rendered them grand and beautiful without giving them any forced connection or relative meaning. We recognize the traces of our own transfigured experience, but we are relieved from the necessity of accepting it as having an inner meaning. De Quincey's singular hold on our affection seems, therefore, to be his rare quality of presenting the unusual but typical dream or reverie as a beautiful object of interest, without endeavoring to give it the character of an allegory or a fable.

The greater part of De Quincey's writings however are historical, critical, and philosophical in character rather than autobiographical; but these are now much neglected. We sometimes read a little of ‘Joan of Arc,’ and no one can read it without great admiration; the ‘Flight of the Tartars’ has even become a part of «prescribed» literature in our American schools; but of other essays than these we have as a rule only a dim impression or a faint memory. There are obvious reasons why De Quincey's historical and philosophical writings, in an age which devotes itself so largely to similar pursuits, no longer recommend themselves to the popular taste. His method is too discursive and leisurely; his subjects as a rule too remote from current interest; his line of thought too intricate. These failings, from our point of view, are the more to be regretted because there has never been an English essayist more entertaining or suggestive than De Quincey. His works cover a very wide range of subject-matter,—from the ‘Knocking on the Gate in Macbeth’ to the ‘Casuistry of Roman Meals’ and the ‘Toilet of a Hebrew Lady.’ His topics are always piquant. Like Poe, De Quincey loved puzzling questions, the cryptograms, the tangled under sides of things, where there are many and conflicting facts to sift and correlate, the points that are now usually settled in foot-notes and by references to German authorities. In dealing with such subjects he showed not only that he possessed the same keen logic which entertains us in Poe, but that he was the master of great stores of learned information. We are never wholly convinced, perhaps, of the eternal truth of his conclusions, but we like to watch him arrive at them. They seem fresh and strange, and we are dazzled by the constantly changing material. Nothing can be more delightful than the constant influx of new objects of thought, the unexpected incidents, the seemingly inexpugnable logic that ends in paradox, the play of human interest in a topic to which all living interest seems alien. There is scarcely a page in all De Quincey's writings that taken by itself is actually dull. In each, one receives a vivid impression of the same lithe and active mind, examining with lively curiosity even a recondite subject; cracking a joke here and dropping a tear there, and never intermitting the smooth flow of acute but often irrelevant observation. The generation that habitually neglects De Quincey has lost little important historical and philosophical information, perhaps, but it has certainly deprived itself of a constant source of entertainment.

As a stylist De Quincey marked a new ideal in English; that of impassioned prose, as he himself expresses it,—prose which deliberately exalts its subject-matter, as the opera does its. And it was really as an opera that De Quincey conceived of the essay. It was to have its recitatives, its mediocre passages, the well and firmly handled parts of ordinary discourse. All comparatively unornamented matter was, however, but preparative to the lyric outburst,—the strophe and antistrophe of modulated song. In this conception of style others had preceded him,—Milton notably,—but only half consciously and not with sustained success. There could be no great English prose until the eighteenth century had trimmed the tangled periods of the seventeenth, and the romantic movement of the nineteenth added fire and enthusiasm to the clear but conventional style of the eighteenth. Ruskin and Carlyle have both the same element of *bravura*, as will be seen if one tries to analyze their best passages as music. But in De Quincey this lyric arrangement is at once more delicate and more obvious, as the reader may assure himself if he reread his favorite passages, noticing how many of them are in essence exclamatory, or actually vocative, as it were. In this ideal of impassioned prose De Quincey gave to the prose of the latter part of the century its keynote. Macaulay is everywhere equally impassioned or unimpassioned; the smooth-flowing and useful canal, rather than the picturesque river in which rapids follow the long reaches of even water, and are in turn succeeded by them. To conceive of style as music,—as symmetry, proportion, and measure, only secondarily dependent on the clear exposition of the actual subject-matter,—that is De Quincey's ideal, and there Pater and Stevenson have followed him.

De Quincey's fame has not gone far beyond the circle of those who speak his native tongue. A recent French critic finds him rough and rude, sinister even in his wit. In that circle however his reputation has been high, though he has not been without stern critics. Mr. Leslie Stephen insists that his logic is more apparent than real; that his humor is spun out and trivial, his jests ill-timed and ill-made. His claim that his 'Confessions' created a new *genre* is futile; they confess nothing epoch-making,—no real crises of soul, merely the adventures of a truant schoolboy, the recollections of a drunkard. He was full of contemptuous and effeminate British prejudices against agnosticism and Continental geniuses. «And so,» Mr. Stephen continues, «in a life of seventy-three years De Quincey read extensively and thought acutely by fits, ate an enormous quantity of opium, wrote a few pages which revealed new capacities in the language, and provided a good deal of respectable padding for the magazines.»

Not a single one of the charges can be wholly denied; on analysis De Quincey proves guilty of all these offenses against ideal culture. Rough jocoseness, diffusiveness, local prejudice, a life spent on details, a lack of philosophy,—these are faults, but they are British faults, Anglo-Saxon faults. They scarcely limit affection or greatly diminish respect. De Quincey was a sophist, a rhetorician, a brilliant talker. There are men of that sort in every club, in every community. We forgive their eccentricity, their lack of fine humor, the most rigid logic, or the highest learning. We do not attempt to reply to them. It is enough if the stream of discourse flows gently on from their lips. A rich and well-modulated vocabulary, finely turned phrases, amusing quips and conceits of fancy, acute observations, a rich store of recondite learning,—these charm and hold us. Such a talker, such a writer, was De Quincey. Such was his task,—to amuse, to interest, and at times to instruct us. One deeper note he struck rarely, but always with the master's hand,—the vibrating note felt in passages characteristic of immensity, solitude, grandeur; and it is to that note that De Quincey owes the individuality of his style and his fame.

There are few facts in De Quincey's long career that bear directly on the criticism of his works. Like Ruskin, he was the son of a well-to-do and cultivated merchant, but the elder De Quincey unfortunately died too early to be of any help in life to his impulsive and unpractical boy, who quarreled with his guardians, ran away from school, and neglected his routine duties at Oxford. His admiration for Wordsworth and Coleridge led him to the Lake country, where he married and settled down. The necessity of providing for his family at last aroused him from his life of meditation and indulgence in opium, and brought him into connection with the periodicals of the day. After the death of his wife in 1840 he moved with his children to the vicinity of Edinburgh, where in somewhat eccentric solitude he spent the last twenty years of his uneventful life.

CHARLES LAMB

From ‹Biographical Essays›

IT SOUNDS paradoxical, but is not so in a bad sense, to say that in every literature of large compass some authors will be found to rest much of the interest which surrounds them on their essential *non*-popularity. They are good for the very reason that they are not in conformity to the current taste. They interest because to the world they are *not* interesting. They attract by means of their repulsion. Not as though it could separately furnish a reason for loving a book, that the majority of men had found it repulsive. *Prima facie*, it must suggest some presumption *against* a book that it has failed to gain public attention. To have roused hostility indeed, to have kindled a feud against its own principles or its temper, may happen to be a good sign. *That* argues power. Hatred may be promising. The deepest revolutions of mind sometimes begin in hatred. But simply to have left a reader unimpressed is in itself a neutral result, from which the inference is doubtful. Yet even *that*, even simple failure to impress, may happen at times to be a result from positive powers in a writer, from special originalities such as rarely reflect themselves in the mirror of the ordinary understanding. It seems little to be perceived, how much the great Scriptural idea of the *worldly* and the *unworldly* is found to emerge in literature as well as in life. In reality, the very same combinations of moral qualities, infinitely varied, which compose the harsh physiognomy of what we call worldliness in the living groups of life, must unavoidably present themselves in books. A library divides into sections of worldly and unworldly, even as a crowd of men divides into that same majority and minority. The world has an instinct for recognizing its own, and recoils from certain qualities when exemplified in books, with the same disgust or defective sympathy as would have governed it in real life. From qualities for instance of childlike simplicity, of shy profundity, or of inspired self-communion, the world does and must turn away its face towards grosser, bolder, more determined, or more intelligible expressions of character and intellect; and not otherwise in literature, nor at all less in literature, than it does in the realities of life.

Charles Lamb, if any ever was, is amongst the class here contemplated; he, if any ever has, ranks amongst writers whose works are destined to be forever unpopular, and yet forever interesting; interesting moreover by means of those very qualities which guarantee their non-popularity. The same qualities which will be found forbidding to the worldly and the thoughtless, which will be found insipid to many even amongst robust and powerful minds, are exactly those which will continue to command a select audience in every generation. The prose essays, under the signature of «Elia,» form the most delightful section amongst Lamb's works. They traverse a peculiar field of observation, sequestered from general interest; and they are composed in a spirit too delicate and unobtrusive to catch the ear of the noisy crowd, clamoring for strong sensations. But this retiring delicacy itself, the pensiveness checkered by gleams of the fanciful, and the humor that is touched with cross-lights of pathos, together with the picturesque quaintness of the objects casually described, whether men, or things, or usages; and in the rear of all this, the constant recurrence to ancient recollections and to decaying forms of household life, as things retiring before the tumult of new and revolutionary generations; — these traits in combination communicate to the papers a grace and strength of originality which nothing in any literature approaches, whether for degree or kind of excellence, except the most felicitous papers of Addison, such as those on Sir Roger de Coverley, and some others in the same vein of composition. They resemble Addison's papers also in the diction, which is natural and idiomatic even to carelessness. They are equally faithful to the truth of nature; and in this only they differ remarkably — that the sketches of Elia reflect the stamp and impress of the writer's own character, whereas in all those of Addison the personal peculiarities of the delineator (though known to the reader from the beginning through the account of the club) are nearly quiescent. Now and then they are recalled into a momentary notice, but they do not act, or at all modify his pictures of Sir Roger or Will Wimble. *They* are slightly and amiably eccentric; but the Spectator himself, in describing them, takes the station of an ordinary observer.

Everywhere, indeed, in the writings of Lamb, and not merely in his 'Elia,' the character of the writer co-operates in an undercurrent to make the effect of the thing written. To understand in the fullest sense either the gayety or the tenderness of a particular passage, you must have some insight into the peculiar bias of the writer's mind, whether native and original, or impressed gradually by the accidents of situation; whether simply developed out of predispositions by the action of life, or violently scorched into the constitution by some fierce fever of calamity. There is in modern literature a whole class of writers, though not a large one, standing within the same category; some marked originality of character in the writer becomes a coefficient with what he says to a common result; you must sympathize with this *personality* in the author before you can appreciate the most significant parts of his views. In most books the writer figures as a mere abstraction, without sex or age or local station, whom the reader banishes from his thoughts. What is written seems to proceed from a blank intellect, not from a man clothed with fleshly peculiarities and differences. These peculiarities and differences neither do, nor (generally speaking) *could* intermingle with the texture of the thoughts so as to modify their force or their direction. In such books — and they form the vast majority — there is nothing to be found or to be looked for beyond the direct objective. (*Sit venia verbo!*) But in a small section of books, the objective in the thought becomes confluent with the subjective in the thinker — the two forces unite for a joint product; and fully to enjoy the product, or fully to apprehend either element, both must be known. It is singular and worth inquiring into, for the reason that the Greek and Roman literature had no such books. Timon of Athens, or Diogenes, one may conceive qualified for this mode of authorship, had journalism existed to rouse them in those days; their «articles» would no doubt have been fearfully caustic. But as they failed to produce anything, and Lucian in an after age is scarcely characteristic enough for the purpose, perhaps we may pronounce Rabelais and Montaigne the earliest of writers in the class described. In the century following theirs came Sir Thomas Browne, and immediately after him La Fontaine. Then came Swift, Sterne, with others less distinguished; in Germany, Hippel the friend of Kant, Harmann the obscure, and the greatest of the whole body — John Paul Friedrich Richter. In him, from the strength and determinateness of his nature as well as from the great extent of his writing, the philosophy of this interaction between the author as a human agency and his theme as an intellectual reagency might best be studied. From him might be derived the largest number of cases, illustrating boldly this absorption of the universal into the concrete — of the pure intellect into the human nature of the author. But nowhere could illustrations be found more interesting — shy, delicate, evanescent — shy as lightning, delicate and evanescent as the colored pencilings on a frosty night from the Northern Lights, than in the better parts of Lamb.

To appreciate Lamb, therefore, it is requisite that his character and temperament should be understood in their coyest and most wayward features. A capital defect it would be if these could not be gathered silently from Lamb's works themselves. It would be a fatal mode of dependency upon an alien and separable accident if they needed an external commentary. But they do *not*. The syllables lurk up and down the writings of Lamb, which decipher his eccentric nature. His character lies there dispersed in anagram; and to any attentive reader the re-gathering and restoration of the total word from its scattered parts is inevitable without an effort. Still it is always a satisfaction in knowing a result, to know also its *why* and *how;* and in so far as every character is likely to be modified by the particular experience, sad or joyous, through which the life has traveled, it is a good contribution towards the knowledge of that resulting character as a whole to have a sketch of that particular experience. What trials did it impose? What energies did it task? What temptations did it unfold? These calls upon the moral powers, which in music so stormy many a life is doomed to hear,— how were they faced? The character in a capital degree molds oftentimes the life, but the life *always* in a subordinate degree molds the character. And the character being in this case of Lamb so much of a key to the writings, it becomes important that the life should be traced, however briefly, as a key to the character.

DESPAIR

From ‹Confessions of an English Opium-Eater›

Then suddenly would come a dream of far different character — a tumultuous dream — commencing with a music such as now I often heard in sleep, music of preparation and of awakening suspense. The undulations of fast gathering tumults were like the opening of the Coronation Anthem; and like that, gave the feeling of a multitudinous movement, of infinite cavalcades filing off, and the tread of innumerable armies. The morning was come of a mighty day — a day of crisis and of ultimate hope for human nature, then suffering mysterious eclipse, and laboring in some dread extremity. Somewhere, but I knew not where,— somehow, but I knew not how,— by some beings, but I knew not by whom,— a battle, a strife, an agony, was traveling through all its stages,— was evolving itself, like the catastrophe of some mighty drama; with which my sympathy was the more insupportable from deepening confusion as to its local scene, its cause, its nature, and its undecipherable issue. I (as is usual in dreams, where of necessity we make ourselves central to every movement) had the power, and yet had not the power, to decide it. I had the power, if I could raise myself to will it; and yet again had not the power, for the weight of twenty Atlantics was upon me, or the oppression of inexpiable guilt. «Deeper than ever plummet sounded,» I lay inactive. Then like a chorus the passion deepened. Some greater interest was at stake, some mightier cause than ever yet the sword had pleaded or trumpet had proclaimed. Then came sudden alarms; hurryings to and fro; trepidations of innumerable fugitives, I knew not whether from the good cause or the bad; darkness and lights; tempest and human faces; and at last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me; and but a moment allowed — and clasped hands, with heart-breaking partings, and then — everlasting farewells! and with a sigh such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of Death, the sound was reverberated — everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated — everlasting farewells!

And I awoke in struggles, and cried aloud, «I will sleep no more!»

THE DEAD SISTER

From ‘Confessions of an English Opium-Eater’

On the day after my sister's death, whilst the sweet temple of her brain was yet unviolated by human scrutiny, I formed my own scheme for seeing her once more. Not for the world would I have made this known, nor have suffered a witness to accompany me. I had never heard of feelings that take the name of «sentimental,» nor dreamed of such a possibility. But grief even in a child hates the light, and shrinks from human eyes. The house was large, there were two staircases; and by one of these I knew that about noon, when all would be quiet, I could steal up into her chamber. I imagine that it was exactly high noon when I reached the chamber door; it was locked, but the key was not taken away. Entering, I closed the door so softly that although it opened upon a hall which ascended through all the stories, no echo ran along the silent walls. Then turning around, I sought my sister's face. But the bed had been moved, and the back was now turned. Nothing met my eyes but one large window wide open, through which the sun of midsummer at noonday was showering down torrents of splendor. The weather was dry, the sky was cloudless, the blue depths seemed the express types of infinity; and it was not possible for eye to behold or for heart to conceive any symbols more pathetic of life and the glory of life.

Let me pause for one instant in approaching a remembrance so affecting and revolutionary for my own mind, and one which (if any earthly remembrance) will survive for me in the hour of death,—to remind some readers, and to inform others, that in the original ‘Opium Confessions’ I endeavored to explain the reason why death, *cæteris paribus*, is more profoundly affecting in summer than in other parts of the year; so far at least as it is liable to any modification at all from accidents of scenery or season. The reason, as I there suggested, lies in the antagonism between the tropical redundancy of life in summer and the dark sterilities of the grave. The summer we see, the grave we haunt with our thoughts; the glory is around us, the darkness is within us. And the two coming into collision, each exalts the other into stronger relief. But in my case there was even a subtler reason why the summer had this intense power of vivifying the spectacle or the thoughts of death. And recollecting it, often I have been struck with the important truth, that far more of our deepest thoughts and feelings pass to us through perplexed combinations of *concrete* objects, pass to us as *involutes* (if I may coin that word) in compound experiences incapable of being disentangled, than ever reach us *directly* and in their own abstract shapes. It had happened that amongst our nursery collection of books was the Bible, illustrated with many pictures. And in long dark evenings, as my three sisters with myself sate by the firelight round the guard of our nursery, no book was so much in request amongst us. It ruled us and swayed us as mysteriously as music. One young nurse, whom we all loved, before any candle was lighted would often strain her eye to read it for us; and sometimes, according to her simple powers, would endeavor to explain what we found obscure. We, the children, were all constitutionally touched with pensiveness; the fitful gloom and sudden lambencies of the room by firelight suited our evening state of feelings; and they suited also the divine revelations of power and mysterious beauty which awed us. Above all, the story of a just man — man and yet *not* man, real above all things and yet shadowy above all things, who had suffered the passion of death in Palestine — slept upon our minds like early dawn upon the waters.

The nurse knew and explained to us the chief differences in Oriental climates; and all these differences (as it happens) express themselves in the great varieties of summer. The cloudless sunlights of Syria — those seemed to argue everlasting summer; the disciples plucking the ears of corn — that *must* be summer; but above all, the very name of Palm Sunday (a festival in the English Church) troubled me like an anthem. « Sunday! » what was *that?* That was the day of peace which masked another peace, deeper than the heart of man can comprehend. « Palms! » what were they? *That* was an equivocal word; palms in the sense of trophies expressed the pomps of life; palms as a product of nature expressed the pomps of summer. Yet still, even this explanation does not suffice; it was not merely by the peace and by the summer, by the deep sound of rest below all rest, and of ascending glory, that I had been haunted. It was also because Jerusalem stood near to those deep images both in time and in place. The great event of Jerusalem was at hand when Palm Sunday came; and the scene of that Sunday was near in place to

Jerusalem. Yet what then was Jerusalem? Did I fancy it to be the *omphalos* (navel) of the earth? That pretension had once been made for Jerusalem, and once for Delphi; and both pretensions had become ridiculous as the figure of the planet became known. Yes, but if not of the earth, for earth's tenant Jerusalem was the *omphalos* of mortality. Yet how? There on the contrary it was, as we infants understood, that mortality had been trampled under foot. True; but for that very reason, there it was that mortality had opened its very gloomiest crater. There it was indeed that the human had risen on wings from the grave; but for that reason, there also it was that the Divine had been swallowed up by the abyss; the lesser star could not rise before the greater would submit to eclipse. Summer therefore had connected itself with death, not merely as a mode of antagonism, but also through intricate relations to Scriptural scenery and events.

Out of this digression, which was almost necessary for the purpose of showing how inextricably my feelings and images of death were entangled with those of summer, I return to the bedchamber of my sister. From the gorgeous sunlight I turned round to the corpse. There lay the sweet childish figure, there the angel face; and as people usually fancy, it was said in the house that no features had suffered any change. Had they not? The forehead indeed,— the serene and noble forehead,— *that* might be the same; but the frozen eyelids, the darkness that seemed to steal from beneath them, the marble lips, the stiffening hands laid palm to palm as if repeating the supplications of closing anguish,— could these be mistaken for life? Had it been so, wherefore did I not spring to those heavenly lips with tears and never-ending kisses? But so it was *not*. I stood checked for a moment; awe, not fear, fell upon me; and whilst I stood, a solemn wind began to blow,— the most mournful that ear ever heard. Mournful! that is saying nothing. It was a wind that had swept the fields of mortality for a hundred centuries. Many times since, upon a summer day, when the sun is about the hottest, I have remarked the same wind arising and uttering the same hollow, solemn, Memnonian, but saintly swell: it is in this world the one sole *audible* symbol of eternity. And three times in my life I have happened to hear the same sound in the same circumstances; namely, when standing between an open window and a dead body on a summer day.

Instantly, when my ear caught this vast Æolian intonation, when my eye filled with the golden fullness of life, the pomps and glory of the heavens outside, and, turning, when it settled upon the frost which overspread my sister's face, instantly a trance fell upon me. A vault seemed to open in the zenith of the far blue sky a shaft which ran up forever. I in spirit rose, as if on billows that also ran up the shaft forever, and the billows seemed to pursue the throne of God; but *that* also ran before us and fled away continually. The flight and the pursuit seemed to go on for ever and ever. Frost, gathering frost, some Sarsar wind of death, seemed to repel me; I slept — for how long I cannot say; slowly I recovered my self-possession, and found myself standing as before, close to my sister's bed.

O flight of the solitary child to the solitary God — flight from the ruined corpse to the throne that could not be ruined! — how rich wert thou in truth for after years! Rapture of grief that, being too mighty for a child to sustain, foundest a happy oblivion in a heaven-born dream, and within that sleep didst conceal a dream; whose meaning, in after years, when slowly I deciphered, suddenly there flashed upon me new light; and even by the grief of a child, as I will show you, reader, hereafter, were confounded the falsehoods of philosophers.

In the 'Opium Confessions' I touched a little upon the extraordinary power connected with opium (after long use) of amplifying the dimensions of time. Space also it amplifies, by degrees that are sometimes terrific. But time it is upon which the exalting and multiplying power of opium chiefly spends its operation. Time becomes infinitely elastic, stretching out to such immeasurable and vanishing termini that it seems ridiculous to compute the sense of it, on waking, by expressions commensurate to human life. As in starry fields one computes by diameters of the earth's orbit, or of Jupiter's, so in valuing the *virtual* time lived during some dreams, the measurement by generations is ridiculous — by millennia is ridiculous; by æons, I should say, if æons were more determinate, would be also ridiculous. On this single occasion, however, in my life, the very inverse phenomenon occurred. But why speak of it in connection with opium? Could a child of six years old have been under that influence? No, but simply because it so exactly reversed the operation of opium. Instead of a short interval expanding into a vast one, upon this occasion a long one had contracted into a minute. I have reason to believe that a *very* long one had elapsed during this wandering or suspension of my perfect mind. When I returned to myself, there was a foot (or I fancied so) on the stairs. I was alarmed; for I believed that if anybody should detect me, means would be taken to prevent my coming again. Hastily, therefore, I kissed the lips that I should kiss no more, and slunk like a guilty thing with stealthy steps from the room. Thus perished the vision, loveliest amongst all the shows which earth has revealed to me; thus mutilated was the parting which should have lasted forever; thus tainted with fear was the farewell sacred to love and grief, to perfect love and perfect grief.

O Ahasuerus, everlasting Jew! fable or not a fable, thou, when first starting on thy endless pilgrimage of woe,—thou, when first flying through the gates of Jerusalem and vainly yearning to leave the pursuing curse behind thee,—couldst not more certainly have read thy doom of sorrow in the misgivings of thy troubled brain, than I when passing forever from my sister's room. The worm was at my heart; and confining myself to that state of life, I may say, the worm that could not die. For if when standing upon the threshold of manhood, I had ceased to feel its perpetual gnawings, *that* was because a vast expansion of intellect,—it was because new hopes, new necessities, and the frenzy of youthful blood, had translated me into a new creature. Man is doubtless *one* by some subtle *nexus* that we cannot perceive, extending from the new-born infant to the superannuated dotard; but as regards many affections and passions incident to his nature at different stages, he is *not* one: the unity of man in this respect is coextensive only with the particular stage to which the passion belongs. Some passions, as that of sexual love, are celestial by one half of their origin, animal and earthly by the other half. These will not survive their own appropriate stage. But love which is *altogether* holy, like that between two children, will revisit undoubtedly by glimpses the silence and the darkness of old age; and I repeat my belief—that unless bodily torment should forbid it, that final experience in my sister's bedroom, or some other in which her innocence was concerned, will rise again for me to illuminate the hour of death.

LEVANA AND OUR LADIES OF SORROW

From ‹Confessions of an English Opium-Eater›

Oftentimes at Oxford I saw Levana in my dreams. I knew her by her Roman symbols. Who is Levana? Reader, that do not pretend to have leisure for very much scholarship, you will not be angry with me for telling you. Levana was the Roman goddess that performed for the new-born infant the earliest office of ennobling kindness,—typical, by its mode, of that grandeur which belongs to man everywhere, and of that benignity in powers invisible which even in pagan worlds sometimes descends to sustain it. At the very moment of birth, just as the infant tasted for the first time the atmosphere of our troubled planet, it was laid on the ground. *That* might bear different interpretations. But immediately, lest so grand a creature should grovel there for more than one instant, either the paternal hand as proxy for the goddess Levana, or some near kinsman as proxy for the father, raised it upright, bade it look erect as the king of all this world, and presented its forehead to the stars, saying perhaps in his heart, «Behold what is greater than yourselves!» This symbolic act represented the function of Levana. And that mysterious lady, who never revealed her face (except to me in dreams), but always acted by delegation, had her name from the Latin verb (as still it is the Italian verb) *levare*, to raise aloft.

This is the explanation of Levana. And hence it has arisen that some people have understood by Levana the tutelary power that controls the education of the nursery. She that would not suffer at his birth even a prefigurative or mimic degradation for her awful ward, far less could be supposed to suffer the real degradation attaching to the non-development of his powers. She therefore watches over human education.

Therefore it is that Levana often communes with the powers that shake man's heart: therefore it is that she dotes upon grief. «These ladies,» said I softly to myself, on seeing the ministers with whom Levana was conversing, «these are the Sorrows; and they are three in number, as the *Graces* are three, who dress man's life with beauty; the *Parcæ* are three, who weave the dark arras of man's life in their mysterious loom always with colors sad in part, sometimes angry with tragic crimson and black;

the *Furies* are three, who visit, with retributions called from the other side of the grave, offenses that walk upon this; and once even the *Muses* were but three, who fit the harp, the trumpet, or the lute, to the great burdens of man's impassioned creations. These are the Sorrows, all three of whom I know." The last words I say *now;* but in Oxford I said, "One of whom I know, and the others too surely I *shall* know." For already in my fervent youth I saw (dimly relieved upon the dark background of my dreams) the imperfect lineaments of the awful sisters. These sisters — by what name shall we call them?

If I say simply "The Sorrows," there will be a chance of mistaking the term; it might be understood of individual sorrow,— separate cases of sorrow,— whereas I want a term expressing the mighty abstractions that incarnate themselves in all individual sufferings of man's heart; and I wish to have these abstractions presented as impersonations; that is, as clothed with human attributes of life, and with functions pointing to flesh. Let us call them therefore *Our Ladies of Sorrow.*

The eldest of the three is named *Mater Lachrymarum*, Our Lady of Tears. She it is that night and day raves and moans, calling for vanished faces. She stood in Rama, where a voice was heard of lamentation,— Rachel weeping for her children, and refusing to be comforted. She it was that stood in Bethlehem on the night when Herod's sword swept its nurseries of Innocents, and the little feet were stiffened forever, which, heard at times as they tottered along floors overhead, woke pulses of love in household hearts that were not unmarked in heaven.

Her eyes are sweet and subtile, wild and sleepy, by turns; oftentimes rising to the clouds, oftentimes challenging the heavens. She wears a diadem round her head. And I knew by childish memories that she could go abroad upon the winds, when she heard that sobbing of litanies, or the thundering of organs, and when she beheld the mustering of summer clouds. This sister, the elder, it is that carries keys more than papal at her girdle, which open every cottage and every palace. She, to my knowledge, sate all last summer by the bedside of the blind beggar, him that so often and so gladly I talked with; whose pious daughter, eight years old, with the sunny countenance, resisted the temptations of play and village mirth to travel all day long on dusty roads with her afflicted father. For this did God send her a great reward. In the springtime of the year, and whilst yet her own spring was budding, he recalled her to himself. But her blind father mourns forever over *her;* still he dreams at midnight that the little guiding hand is locked within his own; and still he wakens to a darkness that is *now* within a second and a deeper darkness. This *Mater Lachrymarum* also has been sitting all this winter of 1844-5 within the bed-chamber of the Czar, bringing before his eyes a daughter (not less pious) that vanished to God not less suddenly, and left behind her a darkness not less profound. By the power of her keys it is that Our Lady of Tears glides, a ghostly intruder, into the chambers of sleepless men, sleepless women, sleepless children, from Ganges to the Nile, from Nile to Mississippi. And her, because she is the first-born of her house, and has the widest empire, let us honor with the title of «Madonna.»

The second sister is called *Mater Suspiriorum*, Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtile; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops forever, forever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. Her sister Madonna is oftentimes stormy and frantic, raging in the highest against Heaven, and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamors, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This sister is the visitor of the Pariah; of the Jew; of the bondsman to the oar in the Mediterranean galleys; of the English criminal in Norfolk Island, blotted out from the books of remembrance in sweet far-off England; of the baffled penitent reverting his eyes forever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him* a stepmother,— as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered; every woman sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head or hope to illumine her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling in her nature germs of holy affections, which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social necessities, now burn sullenly to waste like sepulchral lamps among the ancients; every nun defrauded of her unreturning May-time by wicked kinsmen, whom God will judge; every captive in every dungeon; all that are betrayed, and all that are rejected; outcasts by traditionary law, and children of *hereditary* disgrace:— all these walk with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key; but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest ranks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even in glorious England there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

But the third sister, who is also the youngest—! Hush! whisper whilst we talk of *her!* Her kingdom is not large, or else no flesh should live; but within that kingdom all power is hers. Her head, turreted like that of Cybele, rises almost beyond the reach of sight. She droops not; and her eyes rising so high *might* be hidden by distance. But being what they are, they cannot be hidden; through the treble veil of crape which she wears, the fierce light of a blazing misery, that rests not for matins or for vespers, for noon of day or noon of night, for ebbing or for flowing tide, may be read from the very ground. She is the defier of God. She also is the mother of lunacies, and the suggestress of suicides. Deep lie the roots of her power; but narrow is the nation that she rules. For she can approach only those in whom a profound nature has been upheaved by central convulsions; in whom the heart trembles and the brain rocks under conspiracies of tempest from without and tempest from within. Madonna moves with uncertain steps, fast or slow, but still with tragic grace. Our Lady of Sighs creeps timidly and stealthily. But this youngest sister moves with incalculable motions, bounding, and with a tiger's leaps. She carries no key; for though coming rarely amongst men, she storms all doors at which she is permitted to enter at all. And *her* name is *Mater Tenebrarum*,— Our Lady of Darkness.

These were the *Semnai Theai*, or Sublime Goddesses, these were the *Eumenides*, or Gracious Ladies (so called by antiquity in shuddering propitiation) of my Oxford dreams. Madonna spoke. She spoke by her mysterious hand. Touching my head, she beckoned to our Lady of Sighs; and *what* she spoke, translated out of the signs which (except in dreams) no man reads, was this:—

"Lo! here is he whom in childhood I dedicated to my altars. This is he that once I made my darling. Him I led astray, him I beguiled, and from heaven I stole away his young heart to mine. Through me did he become idolatrous; and through me it was, by languishing desires, that he worshiped the worm, and prayed to the wormy grave. Holy was the grave to him; lovely was its darkness; saintly its corruption. Him, this young idolator, I have seasoned for thee, dear gentle Sister of Sighs! Do thou take him now to *thy* heart, and season him for our dreadful sister. And thou,"—turning to the *Mater Tenebrarum*, she said,—"wicked sister, that temptest and hatest, do thou take him from *her*. See that thy sceptre lie heavy on his head. Suffer not woman and her tenderness to sit near him in his darkness. Banish the frailties of hope, wither the relenting of love, scorch the fountains of tears, curse him as only thou canst curse. So shall he be accomplished in the furnace, so shall he see the things that ought *not* to be seen, sights that are abominable, and secrets that are unutterable. So shall he read elder truths, sad truths, grand truths, fearful truths. So shall he rise again *before* he dies. And so shall our commission be accomplished which from God we had,—to plague his heart until he had unfolded the capacities of his spirit."

SAVANNAH-LA-MAR

From ‹Confessions of an English Opium-Eater›

God smote Savannah-la-mar, and in one night by earthquake removed her, with all her towers standing and population sleeping, from the steadfast foundations of the shore to the coral floors of ocean. And God said:—"Pompeii did I bury and conceal from men through seventeen centuries; this city I will bury, but not conceal. She shall be a monument to men of my mysterious anger, set in azure light through generations to come;

for I will enshrine her in a crystal dome of my tropic seas." This city therefore, like a mighty galleon with all her apparel mounted, streamers flying, and tackling perfect, seems floating along the noiseless depths of ocean; and oftentimes in glassy calms, through the translucid atmosphere of water that now stretches like an air-woven awning above the silent encampment, mariners from every clime look down into her courts and terraces, count her gates, and number the spires of her churches. She is one ample cemetery, and has been for many a year; but in the mighty calms that brood for weeks over tropic latitudes, she fascinates the eye with a *Fata Morgana* revelation as of human life still subsisting, in submarine asylums sacred from the storms that torment our upper air.

Thither, lured by the loveliness of cerulean depths, by the peace of human dwellings privileged from molestation, by the gleam of marble altars sleeping in everlasting sanctity, oftentimes in dreams did I and the Dark Interpreter cleave the watery veil that divided us from her streets. We looked into the belfries, where the pendulous bells were waiting in vain for the summons which should awaken their marriage peals; together we touched the mighty organ keys, that sang no *jubilates* for the ear of Heaven, that sang no requiems for the ear of human sorrow; together we searched the silent nurseries, where the children were all asleep, and had been asleep through five generations. "They are waiting for the heavenly dawn," whispered the Interpreter to himself: "and when that comes, the bells and the organs will utter a *jubilate* repeated by the echoes of Paradise." Then turning to me he said:—"This is sad, this is piteous; but less would not have sufficed for the purpose of God. Look here. Put into a Roman clepsydra one hundred drops of water; let these run out as the sands in an hour-glass, every drop measuring the hundredth part of a second, so that each shall represent but the three-hundred-and-sixty-thousandth part of an hour. Now count the drops as they race along; and when the fiftieth of the hundred is passing, behold! forty-nine are not, because already they have perished; and fifty are not, because they are yet to come. You see therefore how narrow, how incalculably narrow, is the true and actual present. Of that time which we call the present, hardly a hundredth part but belongs either to a past which has fled, or to a future which is still on the wing. It has perished, or it is not born. It was, or it is not. Yet even this approximation to the truth is *infinitely* false. For again subdivide that solitary drop, which only was found to represent the present, into a lower series of similar fractions, and the actual present which you arrest measures now but the thirty-six-millionth of an hour; and so by infinite declensions the true and very present, in which only we live and enjoy, will vanish into a mote of a mote, distinguishable only by a heavenly vision. Therefore the present, which only man possesses, offers less capacity for his footing than the slenderest film that ever spider twisted from her womb. Therefore also even this incalculable shadow from the narrowest pencil of moonlight is more transitory than geometry can measure, or thought of angel can overtake. The time which *is*, contracts into a mathematic point; and even that point perishes a thousand times before we can utter its birth. All is finite in the present; and even that finite is infinite in its velocity of flight towards death. But in God there is nothing finite; but in God there is nothing transitory; but in God there *can* be nothing that tends to death. Therefore it follows that for God there can be no present. The future is the present of God, and to the future it is that he sacrifices the human present. Therefore it is that he works by earthquake. Therefore it is that he works by grief. Oh, deep is the plowing of earthquake! Oh, deep" — (and his voice swelled like a *sanctus* rising from the choir of a cathedral) — "Oh, deep is the plowing of grief! But oftentimes less would not suffice for the agriculture of God. Upon a night of earthquake he builds a thousand years of pleasant habitations for man. Upon the sorrow of an infant he raises oftentimes from human intellects glorious vintages that could not else have been. Less than these fierce plowshares would not have stirred the stubborn soil. The one is needed for earth, our planet, — for earth itself as the dwelling-place of man; but the other is needed yet oftener for God's mightiest instrument, — yes" (and he looked solemnly at myself), "is needed for the mysterious children of the earth!"

THE BISHOP OF BEAUVAIS AND JOAN OF ARC

From ‘Miscellaneous Essays’

Bishop of Beauvais! thy victim died in fire upon a scaffold—thou upon a down bed. But for the departing minutes of life, both are oftentimes alike. At the farewell crisis, when the gates of death are opening, and flesh is resting from its struggles, oftentimes the tortured and torturer have the same truce from carnal torment; both sink together into sleep; together both, sometimes, kindle into dreams. When the mortal mists were gathering fast upon you two, bishop and shepherd girl,—when the pavilions of life were closing up their shadowy curtains about you,—let us try, through the gigantic glooms, to decipher the flying features of your separate visions.

The shepherd girl that had delivered France—she from her dungeon, she from her baiting at the stake, she from her duel with fire, as she entered her last dream saw Domrémy, saw the fountain of Domrémy, saw the pomp of forests in which her childhood had wandered. That Easter festival which man had denied to her languishing heart, that resurrection of springtime which the darkness of dungeons had intercepted from her, hungering after the glorious liberty of forests, were by God given back into her hands, as jewels that had been stolen from her by robbers. With those, perhaps (for the minutes of dreams can stretch into ages), was given back to her by God the bliss of childhood. By special privilege, for *her* might be created in this farewell dream, a second childhood, innocent as the first; but not, like that, sad with the gloom of a fearful mission in the rear. The mission had now been fulfilled. The storm was weathered, the skirts even of that mighty storm were drawing off. The blood that she was to reckon for had been exacted; the tears that she was to shed in secret had been paid to the last. The hatred to herself in all eyes had been faced steadily, had been suffered, had been survived.

Bishop of Beauvais! because the guilt-burdened man is in dreams haunted and waylaid by the most frightful of his crimes; and because upon that fluctuating mirror, rising from the fens of death, most of all are reflected the sweet countenances which the man has laid in ruins; therefore I know, bishop, that you also, entering your final dream, saw Domrémy. That fountain of which the witnesses spoke so much, showed itself to your eyes in pure morning dews; but neither dews nor the holy dawn could cleanse away the bright spots of innocent blood upon its surface. By the fountain, bishop, you saw a woman seated, that hid her face. But as *you* draw near, the woman raises her wasted features. Would Domrémy know them again for the features of her child? Ah, but *you* know them, bishop, well! Oh mercy! what a groan was *that* which the servants, waiting outside the bishop's dream at his bedside, heard from his laboring heart, as at this moment he turned away from the fountain and the woman, seeking rest in the forests afar off. Yet not *so* to escape the woman, whom once again he must behold before he dies. In the forests to which he prays for pity, will he find a respite? What a tumult, what a gathering of feet is there! In glades where only wild deer should run, armies and nations are assembling; towering in the fluctuating crowd are phantoms that belong to departed hours. There is the great English Prince, Regent of France. There is my lord of Winchester, the princely cardinal that died and made no sign. There is the Bishop of Beauvais, clinging to the shelter of thickets. What building is that which hands so rapid are raising? Is it a martyr's scaffold? Will they burn the child of Domrémy a second time? No; it is a tribunal that rises to the clouds; and two nations stand around it, waiting for a trial. Shall my Lord of Beauvais sit upon the judgment seat, and again number the hours for the innocent? Ah! no; he is the prisoner at the bar. Already all is waiting; the mighty audience is gathered, the Court are hurrying to their seats, the witnesses are arrayed, the trumpets are sounding, the judge is taking his place. Oh! but this is sudden. My lord, have you no counsel?—«Counsel I have none; in heaven above, or on earth beneath, counselor there is none now that would take a brief from *me;* all are silent.» Is it indeed come to this? Alas! the time is short, the tumult is wondrous, the crowd stretches away into infinity; but yet I will search in it for somebody to take your brief: I know of somebody that will be your counsel. Who is this that cometh from Domrémy? Who is she in bloody coronation robes from Rheims? Who is she that cometh with blackened flesh from walking the furnaces of Rouen? This is she, the shepherd girl, counselor that had none for herself, whom I choose, bishop, for yours. She it is, I engage, that shall take my lord's brief. She it is, bishop, that would plead for you: yes, bishop, SHE—when heaven and earth are silent.

PAUL DÉROULÈDE

(1846–)

Paul Déroulède

Paul Déroulède received his education in Paris, where he was born. In accordance with the wishes of his friends, he was educated for the law; but before even applying for admission to the bar he yielded to the poetic instinct that had been strong in him since boyhood, and began, under the name of Jean Rebel, to send verses to the Parisian periodicals. When only twenty-three years of age he wrote for the Académie Française a one-act drama in verse, ‘Juan Strenner,’ which however was not a success. The outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war in the same year roused his martial spirit; he enlisted, and at once entered active service, in which he distinguished himself by acts of signal bravery. A wound near the close of the hostilities took him from the field; and it was during the retirement thus enforced that he wrote the lyrics, ‘Songs of the Soldier,’ that first made him famous throughout his native country.

Not since the days of the ‘Marseillaise’ had the fighting spirit of the French people found such sympathetic expression; his songs were read and sung all over the country; they received the highest honor of the Academy, and their popularity continued after peace was declared, nearly one hundred and fifty editions having been exhausted up to 1895. Déroulède now devoted himself to literature and politics. ‘New Songs of the Soldier’ and a volume of ‘Songs of the Peasant,’ almost as popular as the war songs, were interspersed with two more dramatic works, also in verse, one of which, ‘L'Hetman,’ was received on the stage with great favor. A cantata, ‘Vive la France,’ written in 1880, was set to music by Gounod. He also wrote a novel and some treatises dealing with armies and fighting, but his prose works did not attract much attention.

Déroulède's best verses are distinguished for their inspiration and genuine enthusiasm. Careless of form and finish, not always stopping to make sure of his rhymes or perfect his metre, he gave the freest vent to his emotions. Some of the heart-glow which makes the exhilaration of Burns's poems infectious is found in his songs, but they are generally so entirely French that its scope is limited in a way that the Scotch poet's, despite his vernacular, was not. The Frenchman's sympathy is always with the harder side of life. In the ‹Songs of the Soldier› he plays on chords of steel. These verses resound with the blast of the bugle, the roll of the drum, the flash of the sword, the rattle of musketry, the boom of the cannon; and even in the ‹Songs of the Peasant› it is the corn and the wine, as the fruit of toil, that appeal to him, rather than the grass and the flowers embellishing the fields.

THE HARVEST

From ‹Chants du Paysan›

The wheat, the hardy wheat is rippling on the breeze.
'Tis our great mother's sacred mantle spread afar,
Old Earth revered, who gives us life, in whom we are,
We the dull clay the living God molds as he please.

The wheat, the hardy wheat bends down its heavy head,
Blessèd and consecrate by the Eternal hand;
The stalks are green although the yellow ears expand:
Keep them, O Lord, from 'neath the tempest's crushing tread!

The wheat, the hardy wheat spreads like a golden sea
Whose harvesters — bent low beneath the sun's fierce light,
Stanch galley-slaves, whose oar is now the sickle bright —
Cleave down the waves before them falling ceaselessly.

The wheat, the hardy wheat ranged in its serried rows,
Seems like some noble camp upon the distant plain.
Glory to God! — the crickets chirp their wide refrain;
From sheaf to sheaf the welcome bread-song sweeping goes.

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by Thomas Walsh.

IN GOOD QUARTERS

From ‹Poèmes Militaires›

MIREBEAU, 1871

Good old woman, bother not,
Or the place will be too hot:
You might let the fire grow old —
Save your fagots for the cold:
I am drying through and through.

But she, stopping not to hear,
Shook the smoldering ashes near:
«Soldier, not too warm for you!»

Good old woman, do not mind;
At the storehouse I have dined:
Save your vintage and your ham,
And this cloth — such as I am
Are not used to — save it too.

But she heard not what I said —
Filled my glass and cut the bread:
«Soldier, it is here for you!»

Good old woman — sheets for me!
Faith, you treat me royally:
And your stable? on your hay?
There at length my limbs to lay?
I shall sleep like monarchs true.

But she would not be denied
Of the sheets, and spread them wide:
«Soldier, it is made for you!»

Morning came — the parting tear:
Well — good-by! What have we here?
My old knapsack full of food!
Dear old creature — hostess good —
Why indulge me as you do?

It was all that she could say,
Smiling in a tearful way:
«I have one at war like you!»

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by Thomas Walsh.

«GOOD FIGHTING!»

From ‹Poèmes Militaires›

THE Kroumirs leave their mountain den;
Sing, bullets, sing! and bugles, blow!
Good fighting to our gallant men,
And happy they who follow, when,
Brothers in arms so dear, these go.

Yea, happy they who serve our France,
And neither pain nor danger fly;
But in the front of war's advance
Still deem it but a glorious chance,
To be among the brave who die!

No splendid war do we begin,
No glory waits us when 'tis past;
But marching through the fiery din,
We see our serried ranks grow thin,
And blood of Frenchmen welling fast.

French blood!—a treasure so august,
And hoarded with such jealous care,
To crush oppression's strength unjust,
With all the force of right robust,
And buy us back our honor fair;—

We yield it now to duty's claim,
And freely pour out all our store;
Who judges, frees us still from blame;
The Kroumirs' muskets war proclaim;—
In answer let French cannon roar!

Good fighting! and God be your shield,
Our pride's avengers, brave and true!
France watches you upon the field.
Who wear her colors never yield,
For 'tis her heart ye bear with you!

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by Katharine Hillard.

LAST WISHES

From ‹Poèmes Militaires›

A GRAVE for me — a grave — and why?
I do not wish to sleep alone:
Let me within the trenches lie,
Side by side with my soldiers thrown.

Dear old comrades of wars gone by,
Come, 'tis our final «halt» is nigh:
Clasp your brave hearts to my own.

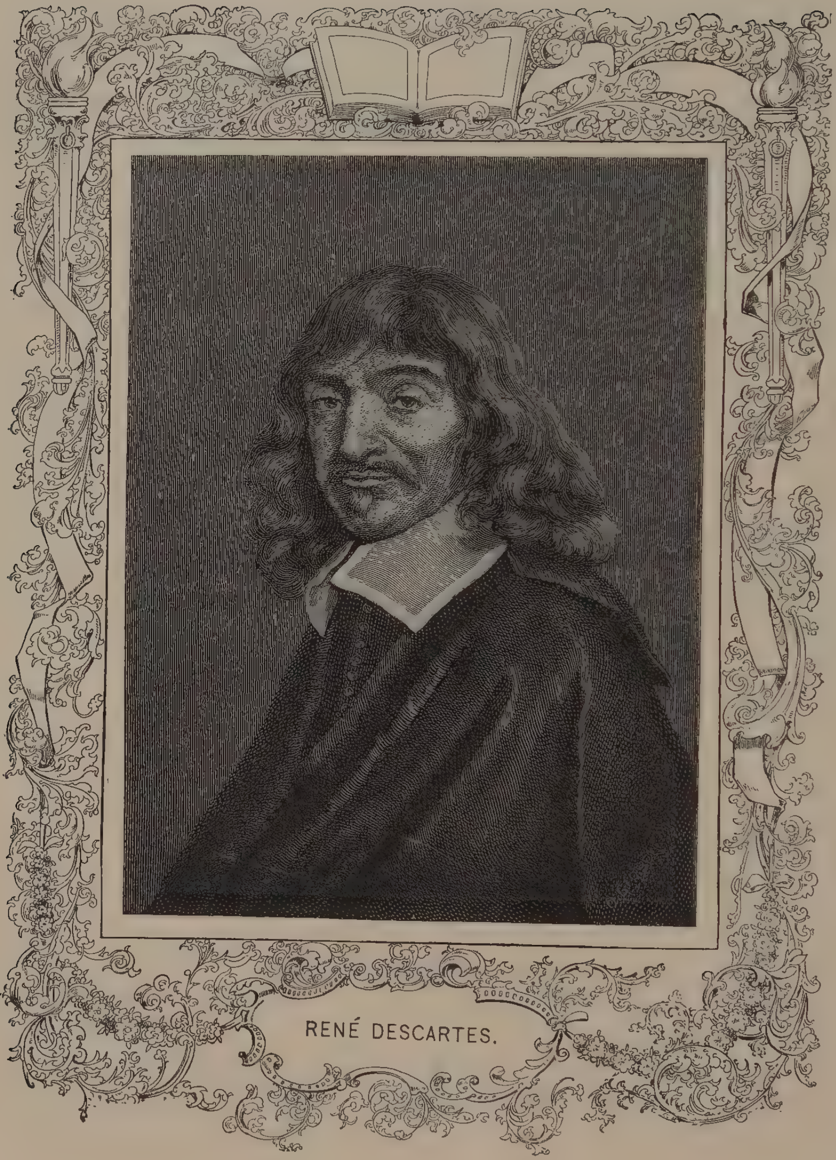
A sheet for me — a sheet — and why?
Such is for them on their beds who moan:
The field is the soldier's place to die,
The field of carnage, of blood and bone.

Dear old comrades of wars gone by,
This is the prayer of my soul's last sigh:
Clasp your brave hearts to my own.

Tears for me — these tears — and why?
Knells let the vanquished foe intone!
France delivered! — I still can cry,
France delivered — invaders flown!

Dear old comrades of wars gone by,
Pain is nothing, and death — a lie!
Clasp your brave hearts to my own!

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by Thomas Walsh.



RENÉ DESCARTES.

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(1596–1650)

The broad scope of literature is illustrated by its inclusion of the writings of René Descartes (Latinized, Renatus Cartesius). Deliberately turning away from books, and making naught alike of learned precedent and literary form, he yet could not but avail himself unconsciously of the heritage which he had discarded.

This notable figure in seventeenth-century philosophy was born of ancient family at La Haye, in Touraine, France, March 31st, 1596; and died at Stockholm, Sweden, February 11th, 1650. From a pleasant student life of eight years in the Jesuit college at La Flèche, he went forth in his seventeenth year with unusual acquirements in mathematics and languages, but in deep dissatisfaction with the long dominant scholastic philosophy and the whole method prescribed for arriving at truth. In a strong youthful revolt, his first step was a decision to discharge his mind of all the prejudices into which his education had trained his thinking. As a beginning in this work he went to Paris, for observation of facts and of men. There, having drifted through a twelvemonth of moderate dissipation, he secluded himself for nearly two years of mathematical study, as though purposing to reduce his universe to an equation in order to solve it. The laws of number he could trust, since their lines configured the eternal harmony.

At the age of twenty-one he entered on a military service of two years in the army of the Netherlands, and then of about two years in the Bavarian army. From 1621, for about four years, he was roaming as an observer of men and nature in Germany, Belgium, and Italy, afterward sojourning in Paris about three and a half years. In 1629 he began twenty years of study and authorship in practical seclusion in Holland. His little work, ‘Discours de la Méthode’ (Leyden, 1637), is often declared to have been the basis for a reconstitution of the science of thought. It would now perhaps be viewed by the majority of critics rather as a necessary clearing of antiquated rubbish from the ground on which the new construction was to rise. Next to it among his works are usually ranked ‘Meditationes de Prima Philosophia,’ and ‘Principia Philosophiæ.’

The long sojourn in Holland was ended in September 1649, in response to an urgent invitation from the studious young Queen

Christina of Sweden, who wanted the now famous philosopher as an ornament to her court. After some hesitancy he sailed for Stockholm, where only five months afterward he died.

It has been said of Descartes that he was a spectator rather than an active worker in affairs. He was no hero, no patriot, no adherent of any party. He entered armies, but not from love of a cause; the army was a sphere in which he could closely observe the aspects of human life. He was never married, and probably had little concern with love. His attachment to a few friends seems to have been sincere. For literature as such he cared little. Erudition, scholarship, historic love, literary elegance, were nothing to him. Art and æsthetics did not appeal to him. Probably he was not a great reader, even of philosophic writers. He delighted in observing facts with a view to finding, stating, and systematizing their relations in one all-comprehending scheme. He never allowed himself to attack the Church in either its doctrine or its discipline. As a writer, though making no attempt at elegance in style, he is deemed remarkably clear and direct when the abstruseness of his usual themes is considered.

Descartes's method in philosophy gives signs of formation on the model of a process in mathematics. In all investigations he would ascertain first what must exist by necessity; thus establishing axioms evidenced in all experience, because independent of all experience. The study of mathematics for use in other departments drew him into investigations whose results made it a new science. He reformed its clumsy nomenclature, also the algebraic use of letters for quantities; he introduced system into the use of exponents to denote the powers of a quantity, thus opening the way for the binomial theorem; he was the first to throw clear light on the negative roots of equations; his is the theorem by use of which the maximum number of positive or negative roots of an equation can be ascertained. Analytical geometry originated with his investigation of the nature and origin of curves.

His mathematical improvements opened the way for the reform of physical science and for its immense modern advance. In his optical investigations he established the law of refraction of light. His ingenious theory of the vortices — tracing gravity, magnetism, light, and heat, to the whirling or revolving movements of the molecules of matter with which the universe is filled — was accepted as science for about a quarter of a century.

In mental science Descartes's primary instrument for search of truth was Doubt: everything was to be doubted until it had been proved. This was provisional skepticism, merely to provide against foregone conclusions. It was not to preclude belief, but to summon and assure belief as distinct from the inane submission to authority, to prejudice, or to impulse. In this process of doubting everything, the philosopher comes at last to one fact which he cannot doubt — the fact that he exists; for if he did not exist he could not be thinking his doubt. *Cogito, ergo sum* is one point of absolute knowledge; it is a clear and ultimate perception.

The first principle of his philosophy is, that our consciousness is truthful in its proper sphere, also that our thought is truthful and trustworthy under these two conditions — when the thought is clear and vivid, and when it is held to a theme utterly distinct from every other theme; since it is impossible for us to believe that either man who thinks, or the universe concerning which he thinks, is organized on the basis of a lie. There are «necessary truths,» and they are discoverable.

A second principle is, the inevitable ascent of our thought from the fragmentary to the perfect, from the finite to the infinite. Thus the thought of the infinite is an «innate idea,» a part of man's potential consciousness. This principle (set forth in one of the selections given herewith) is the Cartesian form of the *a priori* argument for the Divine existence, which like other *a priori* forms is viewed by critics not as a proof in pure logic, but as a commanding and luminous appeal to man's entire moral and intellectual nature.

A third principle is, that the material universe is necessarily reduced in our thought ultimately to two forms, extension and local movement — extension signifying matter, local movement signifying force. There is no such thing as empty space; there are no ultimate indivisible atoms; the universe is infinitely full of matter.

A fourth principle is, that the soul and matter are subsistences so fundamentally and absolutely distinct that they cannot act in reciprocal relations. This compelled Descartes to resort to his strained supposition that all correspondence or synchronism between bodily movements and mental or spiritual activities is merely reflex or automatic, or else is produced directly by act of Deity. For relief from this violent hypothesis, Leibnitz modified the Cartesian philosophy by his famous theory of a pre-established harmony.

Descartes did a great work, but it was not an abiding reconstruction: indeed, it was not construction so much as it was a dream — one of the grandest and most suggestive in the history of thought. Its audacious disparagement of the whole scholastic method startled Europe, upon the dead air of whose philosophy it came as a refreshing breath of transcendental thought. Its suggestions and inspirations are traceable as a permanent enrichment, though its vast fabric swiftly dissolved. The early enthusiasm for it in French literary circles and among professors in the universities of Holland scarcely outlasted a generation. Within a dozen years after the philosopher's death, the Cartesian philosophy was prohibited by ecclesiastical authorities and excluded from the schools. In the British Isles and in Germany the system has been usually considered as an interesting curiosity in the cabinet of philosophies. Yet the unity of all truth through relations vital, subtle, firm, and universal, though seen only in a vision of the night, abides when the night is gone.

With the impressive and noteworthy ‹Discours de la Méthode› (Leyden, 1637), were published three essays supporting it: ‹La Dioptrïque,› ‹Les Météores,› ‹La Géométrie.› Of his other works, the most important are ‹Meditationes de Prima Philosophia› (Paris, 1641; Amsterdam, 1642), and ‹Principia Philosophiæ› (Amsterdam, 1644). A useful English translation of his most important writings, with an introduction, is by John Veitch, LL. D.,—‹The Method, Meditations, and Selections from the Principles› (Edinburgh, 1853; 6th ed., Blackwoods, Edinburgh and London, 1879). See also, English translations of portions of his philosophical works, by W. Cunningham (1877), Lowndes (1878), Mahaffy (1880), Martineau (1885), Henry Rogers, Huxley, and L. Stephen.

For his Life, see ‹Vie de Descartes,› by Baillet (2 vols. 1691); ‹Descartes sa Vie,› etc., by Millet (2 vols. 1867–71); ‹Descartes and his School,› by Kuno Fischer (English translation, 1887).

OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES OF ELEMENTARY LOGICAL THOUGHT

From the ‹Discourse on Method›

As a multitude of laws often only hampers justice, so that a State is best governed when, with few laws, these are rigidly administered; in like manner, instead of the great number of precepts of which Logic is composed, I believed that the four following would prove perfectly sufficient for me, provided I took the firm and unwavering resolution never in a single instance to fail in observing them.

The *first* was never to accept anything for true which I did not clearly know to be such; that is to say, carefully to avoid precipitancy and prejudice, and to comprise nothing more in my judgment than what was presented to my mind so clearly and distinctly as to exclude all ground of doubt.

The *second*, to divide each of the difficulties under examination into as many parts as possible, and as might be necessary for its adequate solution.

The *third*, to conduct my thoughts in such order that, by commencing with objects the simplest and easiest to know, I might ascend by little and little, and as it were step by step, to the knowledge of the more complex; assigning in thought a certain order even to those objects which in their own nature do not stand in a relation of antecedence and sequence.

And the *last*, in every case to make enumerations so complete, and reviews so general, that it might be assured that nothing was omitted.

The long chains of simple and easy reasonings by means of which geometers are accustomed to reach the conclusions of their most difficult demonstrations, had led me to imagine that all things to the knowledge of which man is competent are mutually connected in the same way, and that there is nothing so far removed from us as to be beyond our reach, or so hidden that we cannot discover it, provided only we abstain from accepting the false for the true, and always preserve in our thoughts the order necessary for the deduction of one truth from another. And I had little difficulty in determining the objects with which it was necessary to commence, for I was already persuaded that it must be with the simplest and easiest to know, and, considering that of all those who have hitherto sought truth in the Sciences, the mathematicians alone have been able to find any demonstrations,—that is, any certain and evident reasons,—I did not doubt but that such must have been the rule of their investigations. I resolved to commence, therefore, with the examination of the simplest objects, not anticipating, however, from this any other advantage than that to be found in accustoming my mind to the love and nourishment of truth, and to a distaste for all such reasonings as were unsound. But I had no intention on that account of attempting to master all the particular sciences commonly denominated Mathematics: but observing that however different their objects, they all agree in considering only the various relations or proportions subsisting among those objects, I thought it best for my purpose to consider these proportions in the most general form possible; without referring them to any objects in particular, except such as would most facilitate the knowledge of them, and without by any means restricting them to these, that afterwards I might thus be the better able to apply them to every other class of objects to which they are legitimately applicable. Perceiving, further, that in order to understand these relations I should sometimes have to consider them one by one, and sometimes only to bear them in mind, or embrace them in the aggregate, I thought that in order the better to consider them individually, I should view them as subsisting between straight lines, than which I could find no objects more simple, or capable of being more distinctly represented to my imagination and senses; and on the other hand, that in order to retain them in the memory, or embrace an aggregate of many, I should express them by certain characters the briefest possible. In this way I believed that I could borrow all that was best both in geometrical analysis and in algebra, and correct all the defects of the one by help of the other.

AN ELEMENTARY METHOD OF INQUIRY

From the 'Discourse on Method'

Seeing that our senses sometimes deceive us, I was willing to suppose that there existed nothing really such as they presented to us; and because some men err in reasoning and fall into paralogisms, even on the simplest matters of geometry, I, convinced that I was as open to error as any other, rejected as false all the reasonings I had hitherto taken for demonstrations; and finally, when I considered that the very same thoughts (presentations) which we experience when awake may also be experienced when we are asleep, while there is at that time not one of them true, I supposed that all the objects (presentations) that had ever entered into my mind when awake had in them no more truth than the illusions of my dreams. But immediately upon this I observed that whilst I thus wished to think that all was false, it was absolutely necessary that I, who thus thought, should be somewhat; and as I observed that this truth, —"*I think, hence I am,*"—was so certain and of such evidence that no ground of doubt, however extravagant, could be alleged by the skeptics capable of shaking it, I concluded that I might without scruple accept it as the first principle of the philosophy of which I was in search.

In the next place, I attentively examined what I was, and as I observed that I could suppose that I had no body, and that that there was no world nor any place in which I might be; but that I could not therefore suppose that I was not; and that on the contrary, from the very circumstance that I thought to doubt of the truth of other things, it most clearly and certainly followed that I was; while on the other hand, if I had only ceased to think, although all the other objects which I had ever imagined had been in reality existent, I would have had no reason to believe that I existed; I thence concluded that I was a substance whose whole essence or nature consists only in thinking, and which, that it may exist, has need of no place, nor is dependent on any material thing; so that «I»—that is to say, the mind by which I am what I am—is wholly distinct from the body, and is even more easily known than the latter, and is such that although the latter were not, it would still continue to be all that it is.

After this I inquired in general into what is essential to the truth and certainty of a proposition; for since I had discovered one which I knew to be true, I thought that I must likewise be able to discover the ground of this certitude. And as I observed that in the words «*I think, hence I am*,» there is nothing at all which gives me assurance of their truth beyond this, that I see very clearly that in order to think it is necessary to exist,—I concluded that I might take, as a general rule, the principle that all the things which we very clearly and distinctly conceive are true; only observing however that there is some difficulty in rightly determining the objects which we distinctly conceive.

In the next place, from reflecting on the circumstance that I doubted, and that consequently my being was not wholly perfect (for I clearly saw that it was a greater perfection to know than to doubt), I was led to inquire whence I had learned to think of something more perfect than myself; and I clearly recognized that I must hold this notion from some Nature which in reality was more perfect. As for the thoughts of many other objects external to me, as of the sky, the earth, light, heat, and a thousand more, I was less at a loss to know whence these came; for since I remarked in them nothing which seemed to render them superior to myself, I could believe that if these were true, they were dependences on my own nature in so far as it possessed a certain perfection; and if they were false, that I held them from nothing,—that is to say, that they were in me because of a certain imperfection of my nature. But this could not be the case with the idea of a Nature more perfect than myself: for to receive it from nothing was a thing manifestly impossible; and because it is not less repugnant that the more perfect should be an effect of and dependence on the less perfect, than that something should proceed from nothing, it was equally impossible that I could hold it from myself: accordingly it but remained that it had been placed in me by a Nature which was in reality more perfect than mine, and which even possessed within itself all the perfections of which I could form any idea,—that is to say, in a single word, which was God. . . .

I was disposed straightway to search for other truths; and when I had represented to myself the object of the geometers, which I conceived to be a continuous body, or a space indefinitely extended in length, breadth, and height or depth, divisible into divers parts which admit of different figures and sizes, and of being moved or transposed in all manner of ways (for all this the geometers suppose to be in the object they contemplate), I went over some of their simplest demonstrations. And in the first place, I observed that the great certitude which by common consent is accorded to these demonstrations is founded solely upon this, that they are clearly conceived in accordance with the rules I have already laid down. In the next place, I perceived that there was nothing at all in these demonstrations which could assure me of the existence of their object: thus, for example, supposing a triangle to be given, I distinctly perceived that its three angles were necessarily equal to two right angles, but I did not on that account perceive anything which could assure me that any triangle existed; while on the contrary, recurring to the examination of the idea of a Perfect Being, I found that the existence of the Being was comprised in the idea in the same way that the equality of its three angles to two right angles is comprised in the idea of a triangle, or as in the idea of a sphere, the equidistance of all points on its surface from the centre, or even still more clearly; and that consequently it is at least as certain that God, who is this Perfect Being, is, or exists, as any demonstration of geometry can be.

THE IDEA OF GOD

From the ‹Meditations›

There only remains, therefore, the idea of God, in which I must consider whether there is anything that cannot be supposed to originate with myself. By the name God I understand a substance infinite, eternal, immutable, independent, all-knowing, all-powerful, and by which I myself, and every other thing that exists,—if any such there be,—were created. But these properties are so great and excellent, that the more attentively I consider them, the less I feel persuaded that the idea I have of them owes its origin to myself alone. And thus it is absolutely necessary to conclude, from all that I have before said, that God exists; for though the idea of substance be in my mind owing to this,—that I myself am a substance,—I should not however have the idea of an infinite substance, seeing I am a finite being, unless it were given me by some substance in reality infinite.

And I must not imagine that I do not apprehend the infinite by a true idea, but only by the negation of the finite, in the same way that I comprehend repose and darkness by the negation of motion and light: since, on the contrary, I clearly perceive that there is more reality in the infinite substance than in the finite, and therefore that in some way I possess the perception (notion) of the infinite before that of the finite, that is, the perception of God before that of myself; for how could I know that I doubt, desire, or that something is wanting to me, and that I am not wholly perfect, if I possessed no idea of a being more perfect than myself, by comparison with which I knew the deficiencies of my nature?

And it cannot be said that this idea of God is perhaps materially false, and consequently that it may have arisen from nothing (in other words, that it may exist in me from my imperfection), as I before said of the ideas of heat and cold, and the like; for on the contrary, as this idea is very clear and distinct, and contains in itself more objective reality than any other, there can be no one of itself more true, or less open to the suspicion of falsity.

The idea, I say, of a being supremely perfect and infinite, is in the highest degree true; for although perhaps we may imagine that such a being does not exist, we nevertheless cannot suppose that this idea represents nothing real, as I have already said of the idea of cold. It is likewise clear and distinct in the highest degree, since whatever the mind clearly and distinctly conceives as real or true, and as implying any perfection, is contained entire in this idea. And this is true, nevertheless, although I do not comprehend the infinite, and although there may be in God an infinity of things that I cannot comprehend, nor perhaps even compass by thought in any way; for it is of the nature of the infinite that it should not be comprehended by the finite: and it is enough that I rightly understand this, and judge that all which I clearly perceive, and in which I know there is some perfection, and perhaps also an infinity of properties of which I am ignorant, are formally or eminently in God, in order that the idea I have of him may become the most true, clear, and distinct of all the ideas in my mind.

But perhaps I am something more than I suppose myself to be; and it may be that all those perfections which I attribute to God in some way exist potentially in me, although they do not yet show themselves and are not reduced to act. Indeed, I am already conscious that my knowledge is being increased and perfected by degrees; and I see nothing to prevent it from thus gradually increasing to infinity, nor any reason why, after such increase and perfection, I should not be able thereby to acquire all the other perfections of the Divine nature; nor in fine, why the power I possess of acquiring those perfections, if it really now exist in me, should not be sufficient to produce the ideas of them. Yet on looking more closely into the matter I discover that this cannot be; for in the first place, although it were true that my knowledge daily acquired new degrees of perfection, and although there were potentially in my nature much that was not as yet actually in it, still all these excellences make not the slightest approach to the idea I have of the Deity, in whom there is no perfection merely potentially, but all actually existent; for it is even an unmistakable token of imperfection in my knowledge, that it is augmented by degrees. Further, although my knowledge increase more and more, nevertheless I am not therefore induced to think that it will ever be actually infinite, since it can never reach that point beyond which it shall be incapable of further increase. But I conceive God as actually infinite, so that nothing can be added to his perfection. And in fine, I readily perceive that the objective being of an idea cannot be produced by a being that is merely potentially existent,—which properly speaking is nothing, but only a being existing formally or actually.

And truly, I see nothing in all that I have now said which it is not easy for any one who shall carefully consider it, to discern by the natural light; but when I allow my attention in some degree to relax, the vision of my mind being obscured and as it were blinded by the images of sensible objects, I do not readily remember the reason why the idea of a being more perfect than myself must of necessity have proceeded from a being in reality more perfect. On this account I am here desirous to inquire further whether I, who possess this idea of God, could exist supposing there were no God. And I ask, from whom could I in that case derive my existence? Perhaps from myself, or from my parents, or from some other causes less perfect than God; for anything more perfect, or even equal to God, cannot be thought or imagined. But if I were independent of every other existence, and were myself the author of my being, I should doubt of nothing, I should desire nothing, and in fine, no perfection would be wanting to me; for I should have bestowed upon myself every perfection of which I possess the idea, and I should thus be God. And it must not be imagined that what is now wanting to me is perhaps of more difficult acquisition than that of which I am already possessed; for on the contrary, it is quite manifest that it was a matter of much higher difficulty that I, a thinking being, should arise from nothing, than it would be for me to acquire the knowledge of many things of which I am ignorant, and which are merely the accidents of a thinking substance; and certainly, if I possessed of myself the greater perfection of which I have now spoken,—in other words, if I were the author of my own existence,—I would not at least have denied to myself things that may be more easily obtained, as that infinite variety of knowledge of which I am at present destitute. I could not indeed have denied to myself any property which I perceive is contained in the idea of God, because there is none of these that seems to be more difficult to make or acquire; and if there were any that should happen to be more difficult to acquire, they would certainly appear so to me (supposing that I myself were the source of the other things I possess), because I should discover in them a limit to my power.

PAUL DESJARDINS

(————)

BY GRACE KING

What a man stands for, in the life and literature of his day, is easily enough estimated when his name passes current in his language for a hitherto undesignated shade of meaning. One of the most acute and sensitive of contemporary French critics, M. Jules Lemaître, in an article on an evolutionary phase in modern literature, expresses its significant characteristic to be—«L'idéal de vie intérieure, la morale absolue,—si je puis m'exprimer ainsi, le Desjardinisme» (The ideal of spiritual life, absolute morality,—if I may so express myself, Desjardinism). The term, quickly appropriated by another French critic, and one of the remarkable women of letters of her day,—the late Baronne Blaze de Bury,—is literally interpreted as «summing up whatever is highest and purest and of most rare attainment in the idealism of the present hour.» And she further, with the intuition of her sex, feeling a pertinent question before it is put, singles out the vital germ of difference which distinguishes this young writer as typical of the idealism of the hour, and makes him its name-giver:—«What is in other men the indirect and hidden source of their public acts, is in Paul Desjardins the direct source of life itself—the life to be lived; and also of the mode in which that life is to be conceived and to be made apparent to the world.» Of the life, «sincerity is its prime virtue. Each leader proves his faith by his individual conduct, as by his judgments on events and men. The pure passion of abstract thought fires each to do the best that is his to do. His life is to be the word-for-word translation of his own spirit.»

The death-bed repentance of a century, born skeptical, reared decadent, and professing practical materialism; the conversion of a literature from the pure passion of the senses to the pure passion of abstract thought; the assumption of an apostolic mission by journalists, novelists, playwrights, college professors, and scientific masters, will doubtless furnish the century to come with one of its most curious and interesting fields of study. It is an episode in evolution which may indeed be termed dramatic, this fifth act of the nineteenth-century epic of France,—or it might be called, of Paris; the story of its pilgrimage from revolution to evolution. M. Melchior de Vogüé, himself one of the apostles of the new life, or of the new work in the old life, of France, describes the preparation of the national soil for the growth of Desjardinism. He says:—

«The French children who were born just before 1870 grew up in an atmosphere of patriotic mourning and amidst the discouragement of defeat. National life, such as it became reconstituted after that terrible shock, revealed to them on all sides nothing but abortive hopes, paltry struggles of interest, and a society without any other hierarchy but that of money, and without other principle or ideal than the pursuit of material enjoyment. Literature . . . reflected these same tendencies; it was dejected or vile, and distressed the heart by its artistic dryness or disgusted it by its trivial realism. Science itself . . . began to appear to many what it is in reality, namely, a means, not an end; its prestige declined and its infallibility was questioned. . . . Above all, it was clear from too evident social symptoms that if science can satisfy some very distinguished minds, it can do nothing to moralize and discipline societies. . . .

«For a hundred years after the destruction of the religious and political dogmas of the past, France had lived as best she could on some few fragile dogmas, which had in their turn been consecrated by a naïve superstition; these dogmas were the principles of 1789 — the almightiness of reason, the efficacy of absolute liberty, the sovereignty of the people — in a word, the whole *credo* of the revolution. . . . In order to shake that faith [in these principles] . . . it was necessary that human reason, proclaimed infallible, should turn its arms against itself. And that is what happened. Scientific criticism, after having ruined old dogmatism, . . . made as short work of the revolutionary legend as of the monarchical one, and showed itself as pitiless for the rights of man as it had been for the rights of God. All these causes combined, sufficiently explain the nihilism and pessimism which invaded the souls of the young during the past ten years. . . . Clear-sighted boys analyzed life with a vigor and a precision unknown to their predecessors; having analyzed it, they found it bad; they turned away from life with fear and horror. There was heard from the peaks of intelligence a great cry of discouragement:—‹Beware of deceitful nature; fear life, emancipate yourselves from life!› This cry was first uttered by the masters of contemporary thought,— a Schopenhauer, a Taine, a Tolstoy; below them, thousands of humbler voices repeat it in chorus. According to each one's turn of mind, the new philosophy assumed shades different in appearance — Buddhist nirvana, atheistic nihilism, mystic asceticism; but all these theories proceeded from the same sentiment, and all these doctrines may be reduced to the same formula:—‹Let us depreciate life, let us escape from its snares.›»

Paul Desjardins, by name and family, belongs to the old *bourgeoisie* of France, that reserve force of Gallic virtue to which the French people always look for help in political and moral crises. Like most of the young men of distinction in the French world of letters, he combines professional and literary work; he is professor of rhetoric at the College of St. Stanislas in Paris, and a member of the brilliant editorial staff of the Journal des Débats. Paris offered to his grasp her same old choice of subjects, to his eye the same aspects of life, which form her one freehold for all artists, and he had but the instrument of his guild—his pen; the series of his collected contributions to journals and magazines bear a no more distinctive title than the hackneyed one of 'Notes Contemporaines,' but the sub-titles betray at once the trend of originality: 'Great Souls and Little Lives,' 'The Obscure Ones,' 'Companions of the New Life'; and in the treatment of these subjects, and especially in his sketches of character and critical essays upon the literature of his day, Desjardins's originality resolves itself more and more clearly into spirituality of thought, expressed in an incorruptible simplicity of style. To quote from Madame de Bury again:—«One of the chief characteristics of Paul Desjardins's utterances is their total disinterestedness, their absolute detachment from self. Nowhere else have you the same indescribable purity, the same boundless generosity of joy in others' good, the same pervading altruism.»

These writings were the expression of a mind on a journey, a quest,—not of any one definite mind, for so completely has the personality of the author been subdued to his mission, that his mind seems typical of the general mind of young France in quest of spirituality, his individuality a common one to all participants in the new movement, as it is called.

In 1892 the boldest effort of Desjardins's,—a small pamphlet, 'The Present Duty,'—appeared. It created a sensation in the thinking world of Paris. It marked a definite stage accomplished in the new movement, and an arrival at one stopping-place at least. While the critics were still diagnosing over the pamphlet as a theory, a small band of men, avowing the same convictions as Desjardins, proceeded to test it as a practical truth. They enrolled themselves into a «Union for Moral Action,» which had for its object to associate together, without regard to religious or political beliefs, all serious-minded men who cared to work for the formation of a healthy public opinion, for a moral awakening, and for the education and strengthening of the modern decadent or enervated will power. In general, it is common interests, doctrines, needs, that bring men together in associations. The Union for Moral Action sought, on the contrary, to associate men of diverse interests and opinions—adversaries even,—into collaboration for the common morality. In response to the interpellations, questions, and doubts evoked by 'The Present Duty,' Desjardins published in the Débats a series of articles on 'The Conversion of the Church.' They contributed still more to differentiate him from the other leaders of the new movement; in fact, few caring to share the responsibility of such radical utterances, he has been left in literary isolation in his advanced position: a position which, although it can but command the admiration and respect of the press and the educational and religious contingent of Paris, none the less attracts sarcasm and irony in the world's centre of wit, sensual tolerance, and moral skepticism. As the reproach of his literary confrères expresses it, the author has given way before the apostle. The «life to be lived» commanded the sacrifice. Desjardins makes now but rare appearances in his old journalistic places, and in literature he has determinately severed connections through which fame and fortune might confidently be expected. He now gives his writings anonymously to the small weekly publication, the official organ of the Union for Moral Action, depending for his living upon his professorial position in the Collège St. Stanislas.

‘Une Critique,’ one of Desjardins's earliest essays, strikes the note of his life and writings at a time when he himself was unconscious of its portentous meaning to his world and his literature:—

> «Whatever deserves to be, deserves the best attention of our intellect. Everything calls for interest, only it must be an interest divested of self-interest, and sincere. But above all we must labor—labor hard—to understand, respect, and tenderly love in others whatever contains one single grain of simple intrinsic Goodness. Believe me, this is everywhere, and it is everywhere to be found, if you will only look for it. . . .
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> «The supremacy of the truly Good!—here lies the root of the whole teaching—the whole new way of looking at things and judging men. . . .
>
> «New views of the universality of our world, of poetry, of religion, of kindness (human kindness), of virtue, of worth! . . . Think it over; these are the objects on which our new generation is fixing its thoughts, and trying to awaken yours. This it is which is so new!»

Translation of Madame Blaze de Bury.

Grace King

THE PRESENT DUTY

There are many of us who at times have forgotten our personal troubles, however great they were, by picturing to ourselves the moral distress of souls around us, and by meditating on the possible remedy for this universal ill. Some remain serene before this spectacle; they resign themselves to fatal evil and inextricable doubt; they look with cold blood on that which is. Others, like the one who speaks here, are more affirmative because they are more impassioned, more wounded, knowing neither how to forget nor how to be patient, nor yet how to despair peaceably; they are less troubled by that which is, than by that which ought to be; they have even turned towards that which ought to be, as towards the salvation for which their whole heart is calling. It is their weakness not to know how to interest themselves for any length of time in what does not in some way assume the aspect of a duty that concerns them. They do not contest, in fact, that it is a weakness not to be able to look with a disinterested eye on disease, corporal or spiritual; a weakness to feel the necessity of having something to do at the bedside of the dying, even if that something be in vain,— to employ the anguish of one's heart in preparing, even up to the supreme moment, remedies in the shadow of the chamber.

We are in a state of war. It would be almost cowardly to be silent about our intimate beliefs, for they are contradicted and attacked. We must not content ourselves with a pacification or truce which will permit us with facile weakness to open all the pores of our intelligence to ideas contrary to our conviction. It is necessary on the contrary to gird ourselves, to intrench ourselves. There is to-day, between us and many of our contemporaries, an irreconcilable disagreement that must be faced, a great combat in which parts must be taken. As far as I can see this is what it is. In a word, are subjection to animal instinct, egoism, falsehood, absolutely evil, or are they merely «inelegances»?— that is to say, things deprecated just at present, but which, well ornamented and perfumed with grace, might not again attract us, satisfy us, furnish us a type of life equivalent after all to the life of the sages and saints; for nothing shows us with certainty that the latter is any better than the former.

Are justice and love a sure good, a sure law, and the harbor of safety? Or are they possible illusions, probable vanities? Have we a destiny, an ideal, or are we agitating ourselves without cause and without purpose for the amusement of some malicious demiurge, or simply for the absurd caprice of great Pan? This is the question that divides consciences. A great subject of dispute; surely greater than that of the divinity of Jesus Christ, for example, than that even of the existence of a personal God, or of any other purely speculative question you please; and above all, one more urgent: for there are counter-blows in it, which frighten me in my every-day existence,—me, a man kept to the business of living from the hour I awake to the light until the hour I go to sleep; and according to the answer I may give myself on this point, is the spirit in which I dig in my little garden.

Personally I have taken sides, after reflection; after experience also, I do profess with conviction that humanity has a destiny and that we live for something. What is to be understood exactly by this word humanity? In short, I know not, only that this, of which I know nothing, does not exist yet, but it is on the road to existence, on the road to make itself known; and that it concerns me who am here. What must be understood by this word destiny? I do not know much more; I have only, so far, dreams about it, dreams born of some profound but incommunicable love, which an equal love only could understand; my conscience is not pure enough to conceive a stronger conviction; I only affirm that this destiny of humanity, if it were known, would be such that all men, ignorant or simple, could participate in it. It is already something to know that, in short, I see at least by lightning-flashes, from which side the future will shine; and I walk towards it, and live thus, climbing up in a steep dark forest towards a point where a light is divined, a light that cannot deceive me, but which the obtruding branches of a complicated and apparent life hide from me. That which will bring me nearer it is not arguing about the probable nature of the light, but walking; I mean, fortifying in myself and others a will for the Good. . . .

We have on one side undecided and lukewarm allies, on the other adversaries; and we are forced necessarily to combat. This necessity will become clearer each day; . . . it is the "antagonism of negatives and positives—of those who tend to destroy and those who tend to reconstruct." . . . There is no question here, be it understood, of knowing whether we are deceiving ourselves in choosing such or such a particular duty; that I would concede without trouble, having always estimated that our moral judgments, like our acts, have need of ceaseless revision and amelioration, according to an endless progression. There is a question of much more; of knowing in an absolute manner whether there be a duty for us or not. . . . Good is in fact that which ought to be. Like Christ, who according to St. Paul is not a Yes and a No, but a Yes, duty is a Yes; to slip into it the shadow of a possibility of a No is to destroy it. . . .

The men of to-day are thus negatives or positives, as they range themselves under one opinion or the other. And they must range themselves under one of the two. They cannot escape. The question which divides us, to know whether we live in vain, imposes itself upon every one who opens his lips or moves his finger, upon every conscious being who breathes. That So-and-so never speaks of it, never thinks of it, may be; but their lives answer for them and testify loudly enough. I confess that at first sight the negatives seem for the moment the more numerous. They include many groups, which I shall not enumerate here. I range with them the charming uncertain ones, like M. Renan and his melodious disciples, the sombre and nihilistic Buddhists; all those to whom the law of the completion of man through the good is indeed foolish and chimerical, since their lives imply the negation of it: I mean to say the immense multitude of those who live in any kind of way, good easy people, refined possibly, from caprice, coquetry or laziness, but in complete moral anæsthesia.

Now we come to the positives. They include first of all, true Christians, and all true Jews, attached to the profound spirit of their religion; then the philosophers and poets who affirm or sing the moral ideal, the new disciples of Plato, the Stoics, the Kantians, famous or unknown, to whom life alone, outside of all speculation, is a solid affirmation of the possibility and sufficiency of the good. That the actions of these men and women, on the way to creating themselves free beings, human beings, have the same value as doctrine, cannot be denied. They labor and suffer here and there, each one in his own cell; each one making his own goodness consist in the realization of what he believes to be the absolute good; making themselves faithful servants of something;

existing outside of themselves; the city, religion, charity, justice, truth even, or beauty, conceived as modes of adoration. . . . All these compose, it seems to me, one and the same Church, having the philosophers and poets of duty for doctors of divinity, the heroes of duty for congregation. These may be called by the general name of «Positives.»

Let our eyes be opened: everything that surrounds us is vitiated; many of the children playing on the promenades are sickly, their little faces are often enough marked with livid blotches, their bones are often enough twisted, sad symptoms of the degradation of parents. At every street corner are distributed libertine productions by traders in the depravity of the weak. If any one wishes to recognize the furnace of vice burning within us, let him observe merely the looks cast upon an honest woman as she passes, by respectable men, old men. What savage expressions intercepted under the feverish light of the electric lamps! What tension, what spasms of covetousness! What hallucinations of pleasure and of gold! Tragic matter here, but low tragedies *à la* Balzac, not those acted under an open sky by heroes. A few pistol-shots from time to time, a few poisonings, some drownings: that is all that transpires of the interior evil. The rest passes away in suppressed tears, brooding hatreds, in accepted shame. In such confusion the consciences of the best, of the most disinterested ones, lose the cleanness of their stamp. «You are smiling there at an obscenity,» said I to a friend; he protested; then reflecting, agreed with me, quite astonished that he had not perceived it. Honest men are troubled by all this circumjacent corruption. And rightly so, for at the bottom they are parts of it; they are distinguished from it only by more cleanliness, education, elegance, but not by principle.

In fact, from top to bottom, all this society lives on sensation; that is the common trait through it all, and it is graded according to the quality of its sensations. . . . Fundamentally there is only sensation, with here and there unequally subtle nerves. There are no terms less reconcilable one to another than research of sensation and moral obligation. There is nothing more opposed. Therefore he who expects all from his sensations depends absolutely on externals, upon the fortuitous things of life, in all their incoherence; he is no longer a self-centre, he feels himself no longer responsible, his personality is dissolved, evaporated; it does not react, and ambient nature already absorbs him, like some dead thing. . . .

And this is where we are. I recognize then the evil; I see it in its extent. Nevertheless, to paint this lamentable picture once more is not to show our moral ideas. Our moral idea is what we believe touching the life which shall be best; it is not exactly our life.

Ever since the antique Medea of Ovid uttered that cry, many others, one after another, have groaned over the fact that, seeing the best and approving it, they yet follow the worst—alas!

. . . .

Such a sorrow is to-day profound and universal; there where vice abounds, sorrow superabounds. It is no longer that melancholy born of the insufficiency of external reality, once for all recognized, that felt by Obermann and proud romanticists; but a humble, narrow, ragged rancor, mixed with disdain, with disgust, born of our insufficiency to ourselves, perceived thoroughly. Never, I believe, have we been more generally sad than in these times. And it is that which saves us; I find here our greatness. He alone is lost who feels himself at ease and healthful in evil; consciences without anxiety are the only hopeless ones. Let us hope then, for it cannot be denied that we feel we are very ill. It is apparent that we are in labor with something which shall be our cure. The symptoms of this painful labor are not lacking. The works which are appearing now, pre-eminent in form, but obscure and hesitating in principles, bear signs of the stress in which they were conceived; soon they will seem merely specious. In the poetry, romance, painting, music, of to-day, how many exquisite works are born, not of energy guided by love, but only of a dream of energy, a dream of love, on the shores of inconsolable exile! The truth is, we no longer know what to become; when any one of the antique misfortunes strikes us,—death, abandonment, ruin,—we no longer bear it as our fathers did. We no longer know the dignified, peaceful mournings of old; but under an unexpected stroke, the torment, the complicated rending in the heart, show that it has been secretly undermined. We feel indeed divided within ourselves, and we need to be unified; but the inward unification is possible only for the absolutely debauched or the absolutely good man; there is no *via media;* half-virtue rends us. . . .

Our spiritual life being in truth miracle and mystery, I do not know how to explain what each one knows so well; I do not know how there is developed within us that sublime state known and described under different names by Socrates, Plato, Plotinus, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, St. Paul, St. Augustine, Tauler, the author of the ‘Imitation,’ Shelley, Emerson, Tolstoy: but I know that such a state, which we all know by experience, merits alone the name of positive morality. . . . Well then, history shows that what is true of each one of us personally, is true of society.

THE CONVERSION OF THE CHURCH

While a purer spirit is visibly awakening in ailing humanity and turning it again to Christ, the religion of Christ is rejuvenating. His church is no longer motionless. Thus, in the midst of a great confusion, two religious movements which correspond with one another are defining themselves with sufficient clearness.

On the one side, men without any precise faith, and who thought themselves without any faith, have perceived that they carry within themselves that which they sought: an explanation of themselves, say a principle of salvation. At whatever point these thinking men arrive, it is apparent at the present that they are progressing in the way of the Evangel, and following the path of the cross. . . . On the other side, the Roman Catholic Church, governed by a vigilant Pope, has declared herself. She has spoken of love, at the moment when all were thirsty for love and self-forgetfulness; she intercedes for the suffering masses, at the moment when others were going to do it outside of her, perhaps against her. And more, she is resolutely to-day accenting spirituality, after having so long accented ritual or policy. The new spiritualists and the renewed Christians are thus pushed forward to a meeting with one another by the need of their practical co-operation, and also perhaps by the consciousness of their intimate kinship. They are marching from both sides, with the same rallying cry, Fraternity and sacrifice! Here they are flying from the city of the plain, where a material civilization reigns, and claiming to suffice all; they are emigrating, they know not whither, if it be only towards the heights; there they are descending from their high, narrow, clerical, shut-in fastness.

The conversion that the Church should make is a conversion of the heart. It must become again a school of true liberty and love. Herein lies all the anxiety of the moment; and the great Catholic question lies not between the Church and the Republic, but between the Church and the People, or rather between the Church and the pure Spirit. By loving the people in truth, and by making itself the people, it is clear that the Catholic Church would simply be returning to its original source. Now, returning to its original source is, in a word, all that the Church should do; and that which, following her example, all old institutions should do so as to live and to make us live. To last, means to be re-born perpetually. In truth, each one of these institutions was born in former times, from a definite need of the soul. And at first they responded exactly to it, and that is why they prevailed; all their strength came from the fact that they were necessary; their weakness comes from the fact that they are no longer so. At first the religious community was formed of the imperious necessity of a deliverance from evil; it was not for ornament, not for the charm of burning incense under arches; . . . neither was it formed to do what kings, warriors, and judges are sufficient to do; these last would have absorbed it, but they cannot,—although they try to do so every day; but they can never do so, unless the Church abandons her own functions to usurp theirs. She would then, by forgetting her destination, commit suicide. But even then, another church would form in response to the spiritual hunger and thirst which never ceases. Thus the whole problem of the existence of an institution is to remain forever necessary, and therefore faithful to its original source.

Let us add that civil society cannot maintain itself without also constant rejuvenation,—becoming young again; it also exists only by the active consent of willing minds. It is essential for the harmony of the whole that each person should be an individual and not an automaton. As men, divided by the external accidents of habit, condition, fortune, and united by that which is fundamental within them, the weakening of that which is within them disintegrates them; and thence the principal cause of our divisions comes from hardly any one to-day being in his heart that which he appears to be. Therefore, to bring back diverse conditions to their original source and to the reason of their being, to re-establish the principle in the centre of the life of each, is to do the work of unification. To say to the priests, "Be primitive Christians, imitate the chosen Master," is, socially speaking, a good action which all Christians and non-Christians should applaud, for the salvation of all depends upon it. The remedy of our malady, without doubt, lies not in having all France to mass, but first that all should make their faith the rule of their actions. That which lies at the bottom of our consciences is the thing by which we are brothers.

TWO IMPRESSIONS

From ‹Notes Contemporaines›

Two impressions have remained with me. They date from a month's wandering in Switzerland, at a time when there are no tourists to be met. The first is of the exquisite scenes of wintry Nature, as she shows herself at this season, when none come to visit her — still, reposeful, silent, veiled — how much more touching and impressive than when profaned by the summer crowd! This is the moment when the Jura should be seen! The pine woods on the hills are but faintly powdered with snow, and the patches of dry rusty vegetation beneath lie on the gray stones like the broad red stains of blood. Seeds hang here and there on the bare branches, mixed with the tendrils of the wild vine, or with ghostly clusters of what were the flowers of the clematis. The falling leaves are golden; those already fallen are of an ashen gray. The delicate tracery overhead is of infinite complexity, exquisite in its endless detail; and the whole of this disrobed Nature, in its unadorned simplicity, has an impress of sincerity that reminds you of the drawings of Holbein. Flat pools of shallow water lie about, carpeted with mosses and mirroring the sky; the smoke of the huts rises upward gaunt and straight. No one is near; there are no passers-by; and there is no sound, except that of a waterfall, fuller in its rush than at any other season. Silence — a silence so fragile that the step of a single wayfarer on the road would be enough to break it — reigns undisturbed, and covers everything like a winding-sheet.

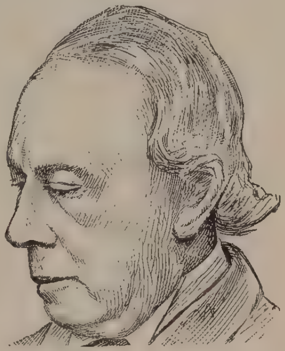
My second impression is of another kind, though almost as comforting, at least by the contrast; it was given me by the conversation of the peasant folk, plain humble mountaineers. The speech and thought of these men is plain and direct, devoid of artifice, clear and fathomable; they furnish you an unvarnished tale of their own simple experience — the life experience of a man, no more! They neither invent nor disguise, and are totally incapable of presenting either fact or circumstances in a way that shall suggest to the hearer another or a different sense. Our woeful habit of ridiculing what lies indeed at the bottom of our hearts they have never learned; they copy, line by line and stroke by stroke, the meaning that is in them, the intentions of their inner mind. In our Parisian haunts, it seems to me that their success would be a problem; but they are heedless of «success»; and to us, when we escape from our vitiated centres, from an atmosphere poisoned by that perpetual straining after effect, the pure undressed simplicity of these «primitives» is as refreshing as to our over-excited and exhausted nerves are the green, quiet, hidden nooks of their Alpine solitudes. With them there is no need of imaginative expression; the trouble of thought is useless; their words are the transparent revelation of their beliefs. The calm brought to the hyper-civilized spirit by this plainness and directness of Nature is absolutely indescribable; and when I came to reflect on the profoundness of mental quietude — I might say of consolation — that I had attained to during my wanderings, I could not help recognizing what a cruel, fatal part is played in the lives of all of us by irony. It is, with Frenchmen, a kind of veneer, worn even by the most unpretentious in place of whatever may be real in them; and where this outward seeming is absent, they are completely at a loss.

Well-bred Frenchmen rarely if ever have or pronounce an opinion, or pass a judgment — unless with a playful obliquity of judgment, and on things in general. They assume an air of knowing what they are talking about, and of having probed the vanity of all human effort before they have ever attempted or approached it; and even this indifference, this disdain, this apparent dislike to the responsibility of so much as an opinion,— even this is not natural, not innate; its formula is not of its own creation; it is but the repetition of what was originated by some one else. The truth is, that in our atmosphere all affirmative action is difficult; it is hard either to be or to do. This habit of irony has destroyed all healthful activity here. It is a mere instrument of evil; if you grasp it, it turns to mischief in your hands, and either slips from and eludes them, or wounds you, as often as not, mortally.

SIR AUBREY DE VERE

(1788–1846)

At Curragh Chase, in the picturesque county of Limerick, Ireland, Aubrey Hunt was born in 1788. On the death of his father he succeeded to the baronetcy and took the name of De Vere. Though his deep love of nature prompted him while very young to write descriptive verses, it was the drama that first seriously attracted him. This form he chose for his first painstaking work, 'Julian the Apostate.' The play opens at the time when Julian, having renounced the faith of his household oppressors, is allowed as a pagan worshiper to participate in the Eleusinian mysteries; when, it is said, he consented to the assassination of his uncle the Emperor Constantius. It found an admiring and enthusiastic audience and received unstinted praise from the critics. One wrote, «Lord Byron has produced nothing equal to it;» and another, «Scott has nothing so intellectual or so elevated among his exquisite sketches.»



Sir Aubrey de Vere

'Mary Tudor,' a drama written two years before his death in 1846, is his «most considerable work,» says his son, and «an expression of his sympathy with great qualities obscured by great errors and great calamities.» The sonnet was however the form of composition he preferred, and as a sonneteer he will be remembered. His sonnets are mainly historical, though he wrote also some religious and descriptive ones which Wordsworth considered «the most perfect of our age.» His earlier ones, modeled after those of Petrarch and Filicaja, are inferior in imagery, phraseology, and nobility of thought to those produced under the influence of Wordsworth, a poet whose genius De Vere was among the first to acknowledge, and whose friendship he regarded as one of the chief honors of his life.

Like his friend, De Vere was a patriot, and in his historical sonnets he has recorded his love for the land of his remoter ancestors, whereas in the 'Lamentations of Ireland' he has expressed with great ardor his love for the land of his birth. In 1842 he published 'The Song of Faith,' which with the exception of a few translations was all he gave the world in twenty years. Devoted to his occupations as a country gentleman, and being of a singularly modest disposition, he neither loved nor courted fame, nor found in it any incentive to action.

Sir Aubrey De Vere was not in the modern acceptance of the term a national poet, nor was he, as so many of his contemporaries, anti-Irish. He modeled his poems on the great English writers, but all he wrote is pervaded with a deep sympathy for Ireland, and that at a time when such sympathy was rare.

THE CRUSADERS

The flattering crowd wreathe laurels for the brow
Of blood-stained chief or regal conqueror;
To Cæsar or the Macedonian bow;
Meteors of earth that set to rise no more:
A hero-worship, as of old? Not now
Should chieftain bend with servile reverence o'er
The fading pageantry of Paynim lore.
True heroes they whose consecrated vow
Led them to Jewry, fighting for the Cross;
While not by Avarice lured, or lust of power
Inspired, they combated that Christ should reign,
And life laid down for him counted no loss.
On Dorylæum's plain, by Antioch's tower,
And Ascalon, sleep well the martyred slain.

THE CHILDREN BAND

From ‹The Crusaders›

All holy influences dwell within
The breast of childhood; instincts fresh from God
Inspire it, ere the heart beneath the rod
Of grief hath bled, or caught the plague of sin.
How mighty was this fervor which could win
Its way to infant souls!—and was the sod
Of Palestine by infant Croises trod?
Like Joseph went they forth, or Benjamin,
In all their touching beauty to redeem?
And did their soft lips kiss the Sepulchre?
Alas! the lovely pageant, as a dream,
Faded! They sank not through ignoble fear;
They felt not Moslem steel. By mountain stream,
In sands, in fens, they died—no mother near!

THE ROCK OF CASHEL

Royal and saintly Cashel! I would gaze
Upon the wreck of thy departed powers
Not in the dewy light of matin hours,
Nor in the meridian pomp of summer blaze,
But at the close of dim autumnal days,
When the sun's parting glance, through slanting showers,
Sheds o'er thy rock-throned battlements and towers
Such awful gleams as brighten o'er decay's
Prophetic cheek. At such a time, methinks,
There breathes from thy lone courts and voiceless aisles
A melancholy moral; such as sinks
On the lone traveler's heart amid the piles
Of vast Persepolis on her mountain stand,
Or Thebes half buried in the desert sand.

THE RIGHT USE OF PRAYER

Therefore when thou wouldst pray, or dost thine alms,
Blow not a trump before thee; hypocrites
Do thus, vaingloriously; the common streets
Boast of their largess, echoing their psalms.
On such the laud of man, like unctuous balms,
Falls with sweet savor. Impious counterfeits!
Prating of heaven, for earth their bosom beats!
Grasping at weeds, they lose immortal palms!
God needs not iteration nor vain cries:
That man communion with his God might share
Below, Christ gave the ordinance of prayer:
Vague ambages and witless ecstasies
Avail not: ere a voice to prayer be given,
The heart should rise on wings of love to heaven.

THE CHURCH

Ay, wisely do we call her Mother — she
Who from her liberal breath breathes sustenance
To nations; a majestic charity!
No marble symbol cold, in suppliant glance
Deceitful smiling; strenuous her advance,

Yet calm; while holy ardors, fancy-free,
Direct her measured steps: in every chance
Sedate — as Una 'neath the forest tree
Encompassed by the lions. Why, alas!
Must her perverse and thoughtless children turn
From her example? Why must the sulky breath
Of Bigotry stain Charity's pure glass?
Poison the springs of Art and Science — burn
The brain through life, and sear the heart in death?

SONNET

Sad is our youth, for it is ever going,
Crumbling away beneath our very feet;
Sad is our life, for onward it is flowing
In currents unperceived, because so fleet;
Sad are our hopes, for they were sweet in sowing —
But tares, self-sown, have overtopped the wheat;
Sad are our joys, for they were sweet in blowing —
And still, oh still, their dying breath is sweet;
And sweet is youth, although it hath bereft us
Of that which made our childhood sweeter still;
And sweet is middle life, for it hath left us
A nearer good to cure an older ill;
And sweet are all things, when we learn to prize them
Not for their sake, but His who grants them, or denies them!

BERNAL DIAZ DEL CASTILLO

(1498–1593)

Bernal Diaz del Castillo, one of the chief chroniclers of the conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards, was born at Medina del Campo in Old Castile, about the year 1498. Concerning the date of his death, authorities differ widely. He died in Guatemala, perhaps not long after 1570, but some say not until 1593.

Of humble origin, he determined while still a youth to seek his fortune in the New World. In 1514 he went with Pedrarias to Darien and Cuba. He was a common soldier with Córdoba in the first expedition to Yucatan in 1517. He accompanied Grijalva to Mexico in the following year, and finally enlisted under the banner of Cortés. In every event that marked the career of that brilliant commander in Mexico, Diaz had a part; he was engaged in one hundred and nineteen battles, and was present at the siege and surrender of the capital in 1521. Of unswerving loyalty and bravery, according to his own naïve statement, he was frequently appointed by Cortés to highly important missions. When Cortés set out to subdue the defection under Cristoval de Olid at Honduras, Diaz followed his old chief in the terrible journey through the forests and swamps.

On his return he presumably adopted the life of a planter, although he had complained loudly of the meagre allotment of land and laborers which the conqueror gave him. In 1568, however, after the lapse of half a century, when Cortés had been dead twenty-one years, we find the veteran comfortably established as *regidor* (a civic officer) of the city of Guatemala, and busily engaged on the narrative of the heroic deeds of his youth. In his introduction to the 'Historia' Diaz frankly admits that his principal motive in taking up his pen was to vindicate the valor of himself and others, who had been completely overshadowed by the exaggerated reputation of Cortés.

When fairly started, he happened to run across the 'Crónica de la Nueva España' (Saragossa, 1554) of Gomara, secretary and chaplain to Cortés, 1540–47. At first the rough old soldier threw down his pen in despair, on noting the polished style of the scholar; but when he became aware of the gross inaccuracies of his predecessor, who had never even set foot in America, he determined, so he declares, to write above all things a faithful narrative of the stirring events in which he had participated. Thus was completed his 'Historia

Verdadera de la Conquista de la Nueva España.› For some reason this valuable manuscript lay neglected in a private library for about sixty years. Finally it fell into the hands of Father Alonso Remor, a sagacious priest, who published it at Madrid in 1632.

The narrative of this soldier historian, although clumsy, full of digressions and repetitions, and laying bare his ignorance, simplicity, and vanity, will nevertheless always be read with far more interest than the weightier works of Las Casas, Gomara, or Herrera. Prescott explained the secret of its fascination when he said:—

> «Bernal Diaz, the untutored child of nature, is a most true and literal copyist of nature. He transfers the scenes of real life by a sort of *daguerreotype* process, if I may so say, to his pages. He is among chroniclers what Defoe is among novelists. . . . All the picturesque scenes and romantic incidents of the campaign are reflected in his pages as in a mirror. The lapse of fifty years has had no power over the spirit of the veteran. The fire of youth glows in every line of his rude history, and as he calls up the scenes of the past, the remembrance of the brave companions who are gone gives, it may be, a warmer coloring to the picture than if it had been made at an earlier period.»

A fairly good English translation of the work of Bernal Diaz appeared in London in 1800, under the title of ‹True History of the Conquest of Mexico.›

FROM THE ‹TRUE HISTORY OF THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO›

Translation of Maurice Keatinge: London, 1800

THE CAPTURE OF GUATIMOTZIN

SANDOVAL at this moment made a signal for the flotilla to close up to him, and perceived that Guatimotzin was prisoner to Holguin, who was taking him to Cortés. Upon this he ordered his rowers to exert their utmost to bring him up to Holguin's vessel, and having arrived by the side of it, he demanded Guatimotzin to be delivered to him as general of the whole force; but Holguin refused, alleging that he had no claim whatever.

A vessel which went to carry the intelligence of the great event, brought also to Cortés, who was then on the summit of the great temple in the Taltelulco, very near the part of the lake where Guatimotzin was captured, an account of the dispute between his officers. Cortés immediately dispatched Luis Marin and Francisco de Lugo to bring the whole party together to his quarters, and thus to stop all litigation; but he enjoined them not to omit treating Guatimotzin and his queen with the greatest respect.

During the interval he employed himself in arranging a state, as well as he could, with cloths and mantles. He also prepared a table with refreshments, to receive his prisoners. As soon as they appeared he went forward to meet them, and embracing Guatimotzin, treated him and all his attendants with every mark of respect.

The unfortunate monarch, with tears in his eyes, and sinking under affliction, then addressed him in the following words:—«Malintzin! I have done that which was my duty in the defense of my kingdom and people; my efforts have failed, and being now brought by force a prisoner in your hands, draw that poniard from your side and stab me to the heart.»

Cortés embraced and used every expression to comfort him, by assurances that he held him in high estimation for the valor and firmness he had shown, and that he had required a submission from him and the people at the time that they could no longer reasonably hope for success, in order to prevent further destruction; but that was all past, and no more to be thought of it; he should continue to reign over the people as he had done before. Cortés then inquired after his queen, to which Guatimotzin replied that in consequence of the compliance of Sandoval with his request, she and her women remained in the *piraguas* until Cortés should decide as to their fate. The general then caused them to be sent for, and treated them in the best manner his situation afforded. The evening was drawing on, and it appeared likely to rain; he therefore sent the whole royal family to Cuyoacan, under the care of Sandoval. The rest of the troops then returned to their former quarters; we to ours of Tacuba, and Cortés, proceeding to Cuyoacan, took the command there, sending Sandoval to resume his station at Tepeaquilla. Thus was the siege of Mexico brought to a conclusion by the capture of Guatimotzin and his chiefs, on the thirteenth of August, at the hour of vespers, being the day of St. Hyppolitus, in the year of our Lord one thousand five hundred and twenty-one. Glorified by our Lord Jesus Christ, and Our Lady the Holy Virgin Mary his blessed mother, Amen!

Guatimotzin was of a noble appearance both in person and countenance; his features were rather large and cheerful, with lively eyes. His age was about twenty-three or four years, and his complexion very fair for an Indian. His queen, the niece of Montezuma, was young and very handsome.

THE MORTALITY AT THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO

WHAT I am going to mention is truth, and I swear and say amen to it. I have read of the destruction of Jerusalem, but I cannot conceive that the mortality there exceeded this of Mexico; for all the people from the distant provinces which belonged to this empire had concentrated themselves here, where they mostly died. The streets, the squares, the houses, and the courts of the Taltelulco were covered with dead bodies; we could not step without treading on them; the lake and canals were filled with them, and the stench was intolerable. For this reason, our troops, immediately after the capture of the royal family, retired to their former quarters. Cortés himself was for some time ill from the effect of it.

CORTÉS

I WILL now proceed to describe the person and disposition of the Marquis [Cortés]. He was of good stature and strongly built, of a rather pale complexion and serious countenance. His features were, if faulty, rather too small; his eyes mild and grave. His beard was black, thin, and scanty; his hair in the same manner. His breast and shoulders were broad, and his body very thin. He was very well limbed, and his legs rather bowed; an excellent horseman, and dexterous in the use of arms. He also possessed the heart and mind which is the principal part of the business. I have heard that when he was a lad in Hispaniola he was very wild about women, and that he had several duels with able swordsmen, in which he always came off with victory. He had the scar of a sword wound near his under lip, which appeared through his beard if closely examined, and which he received in some of those affairs. In his appearance, manners, transactions, conversation, table, and dress, everything bore the appearance of a great lord. His clothes were according to the fashion of the time; he was not fond of silks, damasks, or velvets, but everything plain, and very handsome; nor did he wear large chains of gold, but a small one of fine workmanship bearing the image of Our Lady the Blessed Virgin with her precious Son in her arms, and a Latin motto; and on the reverse, St. John the Baptist with another motto. He wore on his finger a ring with a very fine diamond, and in his cap, which according to the fashion of that day was of velvet, he bore a medal, the head and motto of which I do not recollect; but latterly he wore a plain cloth cap without any ornament.

His table was always magnificently attended and served, with four major-domos or principal officers, a number of pages, and a great quantity of plate, both gold and silver. He dined heartily at midday, and drank a glass of wine mixed with water, of about half a pint. He was not nice in his food, nor expensive, except on particular occasions where he saw the propriety of it. He was very affable with all his captains and soldiers, especially those who accompanied him in his first expedition from Cuba. He was a Latinist, and as I have been told, a bachelor of laws. He was also something of a poet, and a very good rhetorician; very devout to Our Holy Virgin and to St. Peter, St. Jago, and St. John the Baptist, and charitable to the poor. When he swore he used to say, «By my conscience!» and when he was angry with any of us his friends, he would say, «Oh! may you repent it.» When he was very angry, the veins in his throat and forehead used to swell, and when in great wrath he would not utter a syllable to any one. He was very patient under insults or injuries; for some of the soldiers were at times very rude and abusive to him; but he never resented their conduct, although he had often great reason to do so. In such cases he used only to say «Be silent!» or «Go away, in God's name, and take care not to repeat this conduct or I will have you punished.» He was very determined and headstrong in all business of war, not attending to any remonstrances on account of danger; an instance of which he showed in the attack of those fortresses called the Rocks of the Marquis, which he forced us to scale, contrary to our opinions, and when neither courage, council, nor wisdom could give any rational hope of success. . . .

Where we had to erect a fortress, Cortés was the hardest laborer in the trenches; when we were going into battle, he was as forward as any.

Cortés was very fond of play, both at cards and dice, and while playing he was very affable and good-humored. He used frequently at such times those cant expressions which are customary amongst persons who game. In military service he practiced the most strict attention to discipline, constantly going the rounds in person during the night, visiting the quarters of the soldiers and severely reprehending those whom he found without their armor and appointments and not ready to turn out;

repeating to them the proverb that "It is a bad sheep which cannot carry its own wool."

On our expedition to Higueras I perceived that he had acquired a habit which I had never before observed in him, and it was this: after eating, if he did not get his siesta or sleep, his stomach was affected and he fell sick. For this reason, when on the journey, let the rain be ever so heavy or the sun ever so hot, he always reposed for a short time after his repast, a carpet or cloak being spread under a tree, on which he lay down; and having slept a short time, he mounted his horse and proceeded on his journey. When we were engaged in the wars during the conquest of New Spain, he was very thin and slender; but after his return from Higueras he grew fat, and acquired a belly. He at this time trimmed his beard, which had now begun to grow white, in the short fashion. In his early life he was very liberal, but grew close latterly, some of his servants complaining that he did not pay them as he ought; and I have also to observe that in his latter undertakings he never succeeded. Perhaps such was the will of Heaven, his reward being reserved for another place; for he was a good cavalier, and very devout to the Holy Virgin, and also to St. Paul and other Holy Saints. God pardon him his sins, and me mine; and give me a good end, which is better than all conquests and victories over Indians.

Of Divine Aid in the Battle of Santa Maria de la Vitoria

In his account of this action, Gomara says that previous to the arrival of the main body of the cavalry under Cortés, Francisco de Morla appeared in the field upon a gray dappled horse, and that it was one of the holy Apostles, St. Peter or St. Jago, disguised under his person. I say that all our works and victories are guided by the hand of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that in this battle there were so many enemies to every one of us, that they could have buried us under the dust they could have held in their hands, but that the great mercy of God aided us throughout. What Gomara asserts might be the case, and I, sinner as I am, was not worthy to be permitted to see it. What I did see was Francisco de Morla, riding in company with Cortés and the rest upon a chestnut horse; and that circumstance and all the others of that day appear to me, at this moment that I am writing, as if actually passing in view of these sinful eyes. But although I, unworthy sinner that I am, was unfit to behold either of those holy Apostles, upwards of four hundred of us were present: let their testimony be taken. Let inquiry also be made how it happened that when the town was founded on that spot, it was not named after one or other of those holy Apostles, and called St. Jago de la Vitoria, or St. Pedro de la Vitoria, as it was Santa Maria, and a church erected and dedicated to one of those holy saints. Very bad Christians were we indeed, according to the account of Gomara, who, when God sent us his Apostles to fight at our head, did not every day after acknowledge and return thanks for so great a mercy! Would to heaven that it were so; but until I read the chronicle of Gomara I never heard of it, nor was it ever mentioned amongst the conquerors who were then present.

CORTÉS DESTROYS CERTAIN IDOLS

THERE was on the island of Cozumel a temple, and some hideous idols, to which all the Indians of the neighboring districts used to go frequently in solemn procession. . . . Cortés summoned all the caciques and chief persons to come to him, and as well as he could, by signs and interpretations, explained to them that the idols which they worshiped were not gods, but evil things which would draw their souls down to hell, and that if they wished to remain in a brotherly connection with us, they must pull them down and place in their stead the crucifix of our Lord, by whose assistance they would obtain good harvests and the salvation of their souls; with many other good and holy reasons, which he expressed very well. The priests and chiefs replied that they worshiped these gods as their ancestors had done, because they were kind to them; and that if we attempted to molest them, the gods would convince us of their power by destroying us in the sea. Cortés then ordered them to be prostrated, which we immediately did, rolling them down some steps. He next sent for lime, of which there was abundance in the place, and Indian masons, by whom under our direction a very handsome altar was constructed, whereon we placed an image of the Holy Virgin; and the carpenters having made a crucifix, which was erected in a small chapel close to the altar, mass was said by the Reverend Father Juan Diaz, and listened to by the priests, chiefs, and the rest of the natives, with great attention.

CHARLES DIBDIN

(1745–1814)

The saying, «Let me make the songs of a nation and I care not who makes its laws,» receives an interesting illustration in the sea songs of Charles Dibdin. They were written at a momentous period in English history. The splendid gallantry and skill of England's sailors, and the genius of her naval commanders, had made her mistress of the seas, and the key of all combinations against the French Cæsar. The sterling qualities of the British seaman are the inspiration of Dibdin's songs.

Charles Dibdin

Many of these were first given at Dibdin's monodramatic entertainments at the Sans Souci Theatre in London, or as parts of his musical dramas. They appealed at once to Englishmen, and were sung by every ship's crew; they fired the national spirit, and played so important a part in the quickening of English patriotism that the government, recognizing their stirring force in animating the naval enthusiasm during the Napoleonic wars, granted a pension of £200 a year to the «Ocean Bard of England.»

Charles Dibdin was born in 1745, in a small village near the great seaport of Southampton. His love of the salt air drew him often to the ocean's shores, where he saw the ships of all lands pass and repass, and heard the merry sailors' songs. And yet his own songs, upon which his title to a place in literature rests, were incidental products of his active mind. He was an actor, a dramatist, and a composer as well. He wrote some thirty minor plays and the once popular operettas of 'The Shepherd's Artifice,' 'The Padlock,' 'The Quaker,' and 'The Waterman.' He wrote also a 'History of the Stage,' 'Musical Tour through England,' and an autobiography which bore the title 'Professional Life,' His two novels are now forgotten, but it is interesting to recall that for the Stratford Jubilee in honor of Shakespeare, the words of which were by Garrick, Dibdin composed the much admired songs, dances, and serenades. He wrote more than thirteen hundred songs, most of which had of course only a brief existence; but there were enough of them, burning with genuine lyric fire, to entitle him to grateful remembrance among England's poets.

In all of these songs, whether the theme be his native land or the wind-swept seas that close it round, love is the poet's real inspiration; love of old England and her sovereign, love of the wealth-bringing ocean, love of the good ship that sails its waves. This fundamental affection for the things of which he sings has endeared the songs of Dibdin to the heart of the British sailor; and in this lies the proof of their genuineness. His songs are simple and melodious; there is a manly ring in their word and rhythm; they have the swagger and the fearlessness of the typical tar; they have, too, the beat of his true heart, his kindly waggery, his sturdy fidelity to his country and his king. There is nothing quite like them in any other literature.

SEA SONG

I SAILED in the good ship the Kitty,
With a smart blowing gale and rough sea;
Left my Polly, the lads call so pretty,
Safe at her anchor. Yo, Yea!

She blubbered salt tears when we parted,
And cried «Now be constant to me!»
I told her not to be down-hearted,
So up went the anchor. Yo, Yea!

And from that time, no worse nor no better,
I've thought on just nothing but she,
Nor could grog nor flip make me forget her,—
She's my best bower-anchor. Yo, Yea!

When the wind whistled larboard and starboard,
And the storm came on weather and lee,
The hope I with her should be harbored
Was my cable and anchor. Yo, Yea!

And yet, my boys, would you believe me?
I returned with no rhino from sea;
Mistress Polly would never receive me,
So again I heav'd anchor. Yo, Yea!

SONG: THE HEART OF A TAR

Yet though I've no fortune to offer,
I've something to put on a par;
Come, then, and accept of my proffer,—
'Tis the kind honest heart of a tar.

Ne'er let such a trifle as this is,
Girls, be to my pleasure a bar;
You'll be rich though 'tis only in kisses,
With the kind honest heart of a tar.

Besides, I am none of your ninnies;
The next time I come from afar,
I'll give you a lapful of guineas,
With the kind honest heart of a tar.

Your lords, with such fine baby faces,
That strut in a garter and star,—
Have they, under their tambour and laces,
The kind honest heart of a tar?

POOR JACK

Go patter to lubbers and swabs, do you see,
'Bout danger, and fear, and the like;
A tight-water boat and good sea-room give me,
And it ain't to a little I'll strike.
Though the tempest topgallant-mast smack smooth should smite
And shiver each splinter of wood,
Clear the deck, stow the yards, and house everything tight,
And under reef foresail we'll scud:
Avast! nor don't think me a milksop so soft,
To be taken for trifles aback;
For they say there's a Providence sits up aloft,
To keep watch for the life of poor Jack!

I heard our good chaplain palaver one day
About souls, heaven, mercy, and such;
And, my timbers! what lingo he'd coil and belay;
Why, 'twas just all as one as High Dutch;
For he said how a sparrow can't founder, d'ye see,
Without orders that come down below;

And a many fine things that proved clearly to me oft
    That Providence takes us in tow:
For, says he, do you mind me, let storms ne'er so oft
    Take the topsails of sailors aback,
There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft,
    To keep watch for the life of poor Jack!

I said to our Poll (for d'ye see, she would cry
    When last we weighed anchor for sea),
What argufies sniveling and piping your eye?
    Why, what a young fool you must be!
Can't you see the world's wide, and there's room for us all,
    Both for seamen and lubbers ashore?
And so if to old Davy I go, my dear Poll,
    Why, you never will hear of me more.
What then? all's a hazard: come, don't be so soft;
    Perhaps I may, laughing, come back;
For d'ye see? there's a cherub sits smiling aloft,
    To keep watch for the life of poor Jack.

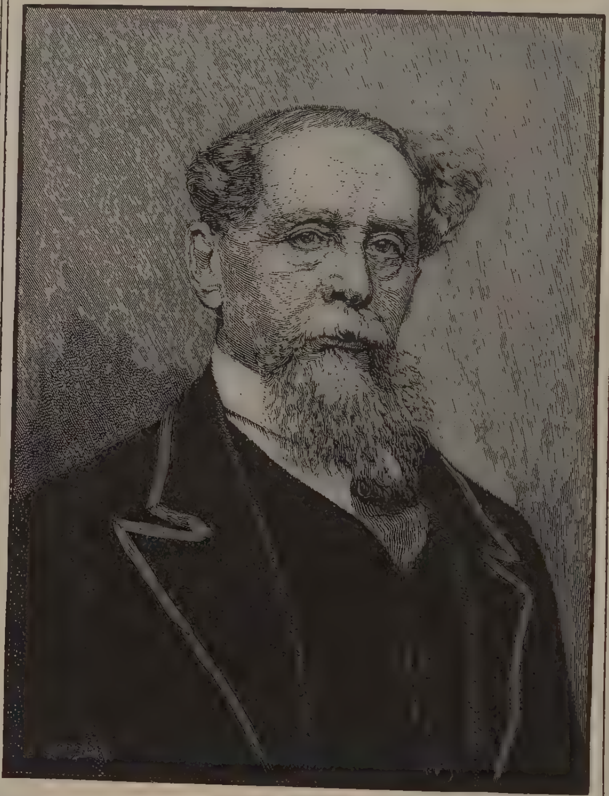
D'ye mind me? a sailor should be every inch
    All as one as a piece of the ship,
And with her brave the world, without offering to flinch,
    From the moment the anchor's a-trip.
As for me, in all weathers, all times, sides, and ends,
    Naught's a trouble from duty that springs;
For my heart is my Poll's, and my rhino's my friend's,
    And as for my life, 'tis the King's.
Even when my time comes, ne'er believe me so soft;
    As for grief to be taken aback;
For the same little cherub that sits up aloft
    Will look out a good berth for poor Jack.

TOM BOWLING

HERE, a sheer hulk, lies poor Tom Bowling,
    The darling of our crew;
No more he'll hear the tempest howling,
    For Death has broached him to.
His form was of the manliest beauty,
    His heart was kind and soft;
Faithful below he did his duty,
    But now he's gone aloft.

Tom never from his word departed,
His virtues were so rare;
His friends were many and true-hearted,
His Poll was kind and fair:
And then he'd sing so blithe and jolly;
Ah, many's the time and oft!
But mirth is turned to melancholy,
For Tom is gone aloft.

Yet shall poor Tom find pleasant weather,
When He who all commands
Shall give, to call life's crew together,
The word to pipe all hands.
Thus Death, who kings and tars dispatches,
In vain Tom's life has doffed;
For though his body's under hatches,
His soul is gone aloft.



CHARLES DICKENS.

CHARLES DICKENS

(1812–1870)

When a great genius arises he makes his place in the world and explains himself. Criticism does not make him and cannot unmake him. He may have great defects and great faults. By exposing them and dwelling upon them, the critics may apparently nibble him all away. When the critics get through, however, he remains pretty much the force he was originally. For real genius is a sort of elemental force that enters the human world, both for good and evil, and leaves its lasting impression. It is like a new river, of waters sweet and bitter, clear and muddy, bearing on its bosom ships and wrecks, the lovely and the ugly, the incongruous elements of human life and human contrivance. When it floods and overflows, the critics run away; when it subsides the critics come back and begin to analyze it, and say, «It wasn't much of a shower.»

Charles Dickens is to be judged, like any other genius, by what he created, what he brought into the world. We are not called on to say whether he was as great as Homer, as Shakespeare, as Cervantes, as Fielding, as Manzoni, as Thackeray. He was always quite himself, and followed no model, though thousands of writers have attempted to follow him and acquire the title of being Dickens-y. For over half a century he had the ear of the English-reading public the world over. It laughed with him, it cried with him, it hungered after him. Whatever he wrote, it must read; whenever he read, it crowded to hear his masterly interpretations; when he acted, it was delighted with his histrionic cleverness. In all these manifestations there was the attraction of a most winning personality.

He invented a new kind of irresistible humor, he told stories that went to the heart of humanity, he amused, he warmed, he cheered the world. We almost think that modern Christmas was his invention, such an apostle was he of kindliness and brotherly love, of sympathy with the poor and the struggling, of charity which is not condescension. He made pictures of low life, and perhaps unreal shadows of high life, and vivid scenes that lighted up great periods of history. For producing effects and holding the reader he was a wizard with his pen. And so the world hung on him, read him and re-read him, recited him, declaimed him, put him into reading-books, diffused him in common speech and in all literature. In all English literature his characters are familiar, stand for types, and need no explanation. And now, having filled itself up with him, been saturated with him, made him in some ways as common as the air, does the world tire of him, turn on him, say that it cannot read him any more, that he is commonplace? If so, the world has made him commonplace. But the publishers' and booksellers' accounts show no diminution in his popularity with the new generation.

At a dinner where Dickens was discussed, a gentleman won distinction by this sole contribution to the conversation:—«There is no evidence in Dickens's works that he ever read a book.» It is true that Dickens drew most of his material from his own observation of life, and from his fertile imagination, which was often fantastic. It is true that he could not be called in the narrow sense a literary writer, that he made no literary mosaic, and few allusions to the literature of the world. Is it not probable that he had the art to assimilate his material? For it is impossible that any writer could pour out such a great flood about the world and human nature without refreshing his own mind at the great fountains of literature. And when we turn to such a tale as 'The Tale of Two Cities,' we are conscious of the vast amount of reading and study he must have done in order to give us such a true and vivid picture of the Revolutionary period.

It has been said that Dickens did not write good English, that he could not draw a lady or a gentleman, that he often makes ear-marks and personal peculiarities stand for character, that he is sometimes turgid when he would be impressive, sometimes stilted when he would be fine, that his sentiment is often false and worked up, that his attempts at tragedy are melodramatic, and that sometimes his comedy comes near being farcical. His whole literary attitude has been compared to his boyish fondness for striking apparel.

There is some truth in all these criticisms, though they do not occur spontaneously to a fresh reader while he is under the spell of Dickens, nor were they much brought forward when he was creating a new school and setting a fashion for an admiring world. His style, which is quite a part of this singular man, can easily be pulled in pieces and condemned, and it is not a safe one to imitate. No doubt he wrought for effects, for he was a magician, and used exaggeration in high lights and low lights on his crowded canvas. Say what you will of all these defects, of his lack of classic literary training, of his tendency to melodrama, of his tricks of style, even of a ray of lime-light here and there, it remains that he is a great power, a tremendous force in modern life; half an hour of him is worth a lifetime of his self-conscious analyzers, and the world is a more cheerful and sympathetic world because of the loving and lovable presence in it of Charles Dickens.

A sketch of his life and writings, necessarily much condensed for use here, has been furnished by Mr. Laurence Hutton.

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF DICKENS

BY LAURENCE HUTTON

Charles Dickens was born at Landport in Portsea, on the 7th of February, 1812. His childhood was a very unhappy one. He describes himself in one of his essays as «a very queer, small boy,» and his biographer tells us that he was very sickly as well as very small. He had little schooling, and numberless hard knocks, and rough and toilsome was the first quarter of his journey through life. Many of the passages in ‹David Copperfield› are literally true pictures of his own early experiences, and much of that work may be accepted as autobiographical. He was fond of putting himself and his own people into his books, and of drawing his scenes and his characters from real life, sometimes only slightly disguised. Tradition says that he built both Mr. Micawber and Mr. Turveydrop out of his own father; that Mrs. Nickleby was based upon his own mother; and that his wife, who was the Dora of ‹Copperfield› in the beginning of their married life, became in later years the Flora of ‹Little Dorrit.› The elder Dickens had unquestionably some of the traits ascribed to the unpractical friend of Copperfield's youth, and something of the cruel self-indulgence and pompous deportment of the dancing-master in ‹Bleak House.› And it was during his father's imprisonment for debt when the son was but a youth, that Dickens got his intimate knowledge of the Marshalsea, and of the heart-breaking existence of its inmates. Some years before ‹Copperfield› was written, he described in a fragment of actual autobiography, quoted by Forster, the following scene:—

> «My father was waiting for me in the lodge [of the Debtor's Prison]; and we went up to his room, on the top story but one, and cried very much. And he told me, I remember, to take warning by the Marshalsea, and to observe that if a man had twenty pounds a year, and spent nineteen pounds nineteen shillings and sixpence, he would be happy; but that a shilling spent the other way would make him wretched.»

In these chambers Dickens afterwards put Mr. Dorrit. And while the father remained in confinement, the son lived for a time in a back attic in Lant Street, Borough, which was to become the home of the eccentric Robert Sawyer, and the scene of a famous supper party given to do honor to Mr. Pickwick «and the other chaps.» «If a man wishes to abstract himself from the world, to remove himself from the reach of temptation, to place himself beyond the possibility of any inducement to look out of the window, he should by all means go to Lant Street.» Lant Street still exists, as Mr. Pickwick found it, and as Dickens knew it between 1822 and 1824. He had numerous lodgings, alone and with his family, during those hard times; all of them of the same miserable, wretched character; and it is interesting to know that the original of Mrs. Pipchin was his landlady in Camden Town, and that the original of the Marchioness waited on the elder Dickens during his stay in the Marshalsea.

The story of the unhappy drudgery of the young Copperfield is the story of the young Dickens without exaggeration.

> «No words can express the secret agony of my soul as I sunk into this companionship,» he wrote in 1845 or 1846,—«compared these every-day associates with those of my happier childhood, and felt my early hopes of growing up to be a learned and distinguished man crushed in my breast. The deep remembrance of the sense I had of being utterly neglected and hopeless; of the shame I felt in my position; of the misery it was to my young heart to believe that, day by day, what I had learned, and thought, and delighted in, and raised my fancy and my emulation up by, was passing away from me, never to be brought back any more, cannot be written. My whole nature was so penetrated with the grief and humiliation of such considerations, that even now, famous and caressed and happy, I often forget, in my dreams, that I have a dear wife and children; even that I am a man; and I wander desolately back to that time of my life.»

In the course of a few years, happily, the cloud lifted; and in 1831, when Dickens was a youth of nineteen, we find him beginning life as a reporting journalist. He wrote occasional «pieces» for the magazines, and some faint hope of growing up to be a distinguished and learned man rose again, no doubt, in his breast. N. P. Willis met him one day in 1835, when, as Willis expresses it, Dickens was a «paragraphist» for the London Morning Chronicle. The «paragraphist,» according to Willis, was lodging in the most crowded part of Holborn, in an uncarpeted and bleak-looking room, with a deal table, two or three chairs, and a few books. It was up a long flight of stairs, this room; and its occupant «was dressed very much as he has since described Dick Swiveller—minus the swell look. His hair was cropped close to his head, his clothes were scant, though jauntily cut; and after exchanging a ragged office coat for a shabby blue, he stood by the door collarless and buttoned up, the very personification, I thought, of a close sailer to the wind. . . . Not long after this Macrone sent me the sheets of ‹Sketches by Boz,› with a note saying they were by the gentleman [Dickens] who went with us to Newgate. I read the book with amazement at the genius displayed in it; and in my note of reply assured Macrone that I thought his fortune was made, as a publisher, if he could monopolize the author.» This picture is very graphic. But it must be accepted with a grain of salt.

The ‹Sketches by Boz, Illustrative of Every-Day Life and Every-Day People,› Dickens's first printed book, appeared in 1835. A further series of papers, bearing the same title, was published the next year. «Boz» was the nickname he had bestowed upon his younger brother Augustus, in honor of the Moses of the ‹Vicar of Wakefield.› The word, pronounced through the nose, became «Boses,» afterwards shortened to «Boz,» which, said Dickens, «was a very familiar household word to me long before I was an author. And so I came to adopt it.» The sketches, the character of which is explained in their sub-title, were regarded as unusually clever things of their kind. They attracted at once great attention in England, and established the fact that a new star had risen in the firmament of British letters.

Dickens was married on the 2d of April, 1836, to Miss Catherine Hogarth, just a week after he had published the first shilling number of ‹The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club: Edited by Boz.› The work appeared in book form the next year. Its success was phenomenal, and it brought to its author not only fame but a fixed sum per annum, which is better. It assured his comfort in the present and in the future, and it wiped out all the care and troubles of his past. It was in itself the result of an accident. Messrs. Chapman and Hall, attracted by the popularity of the Sketches, proposed to their author a series of monthly articles to illustrate certain pictures of a comic character by Robert Seymour, an artist in their employment. Dickens assented, upon the condition that «the plates were to be so modified that they would arise naturally out of the text.» And so between them Mr. Pickwick was born, although under the saddest of circumstances; for only a single number had appeared when Seymour died by his own hand. Hablot K. Browne succeeded him, signing the name of «Phiz»; and with «Boz» was «Phiz» long associated in other prosperous ventures. Mr. Pickwick is a benevolent, tender-hearted elderly gentleman, who, as the president of a club organized «for the purpose of investigating the source of the Hampstead ponds,» journeys about England in all directions with three companions, to whom he acts as guide, philosopher, and friend. He is an amiable old goose, and his companions are equally verdant and unsophisticated; but since 1837 they have been as famous as any men in fiction. The story is a long one, the pages are crowded with incidents and with characters. It is disconnected, often exaggerated, much of it is as improbable as it is impossible, but it has made the world laugh for sixty years now; and it still holds its own unique place in the hearts of men.

From this period the pen of Dickens was never idle for forty-three years. ‹Pickwick› was succeeded by ‹Oliver Twist,› begun in Bentley's Magazine in January, 1837, and printed in book form in 1838. It is the story of the progress of a parish boy, and it is sad and serious in its character. The hero was born and brought up in a workhouse. He was starved and ill-treated; but he always retained his innocence and his purity of mind. He fell among thieves,—Bill and Nancy Sykes, Fagin and the Artful Dodger, to whom much powerful description is devoted,—but he triumphed in the end. The life of the very poor and of the very degraded among the people of England during the latter end of the first half of the nineteenth century is admirably portrayed; and for the first time in their existence the British blackguards of both sexes were exhibited in fiction, clad in all their instincts of low brutality, and without that glamour of attractive romance which the earlier writers had given to Jack Sheppard, to Jonathan Wild, or to Moll Flanders.

Two dramatic compositions by Dickens, neither of them adding very much to his reputation, appeared in 1836, to wit:—'The Stranger Gentleman, A Comic Burletta in Three Acts'; and 'The Village Coquette,' a comic opera in two acts. They were presented upon the stage towards the close of that year, with fair success.

In 1838 Dickens edited the Memoirs of Joseph Grimaldi, a celebrated clown. His share in the composition of this work was comparatively small, and consisted of a Preface, dated February of that year. It was followed by 'Sketches of Young Gentlemen,' and by 'The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby,' both published in 1839. To this latter he signed his name, Charles Dickens, dropping from that period the pseudonym of «Boz.» The titular hero is the son of a poor country gentleman. He makes his own way in the world as the usher of a Yorkshire school, as an actor in a traveling troupe, and as the clerk and finally the partner in a prosperous mercantile house in London. Smike, his pupil; Crummles, his theatrical manager; Ninetta Crummles, the Infant Phenomenon of the company, Newman Noggs, the clerk of his uncle Ralph Nickleby, the Cheeryble Brothers, his employers, are among the most successful and charming of Dickens's earlier creations. «Mr. Squeers and his school,» he says, «were faint and feeble pictures of an existing reality, purposely subdued and kept down lest they should be deemed impossible.» That such establishments ceased to exist in reality in England after the appearance of 'Nickleby,' is proof enough of the good his pictures did in this and in many other ways.

In 1840–1841 appeared 'Master Humphrey's Clock,' comprising the two stories of 'The Old Curiosity Shop' and 'Barnaby Rudge,' which were subsequently printed separately. The story of Little Nell, the gentle, lovable inmate of the Curiosity Shop, is one of the most sad and tender tales in fiction, and Dickens himself confessed that he was almost heart-broken when she died. Her path was crossed by Quilp, a cunning and malicious dwarf of hideous appearance, who consumed hard-boiled eggs, shells and all, for his breakfast; ate his prawns with their heads and their tails on, drank scalding hot tea, and performed so many horrifying acts that one almost doubted that he was human; and by Christopher Nubbles, a shock-headed, shambling, awkward, devoted lad, the only element of cheerfulness that ever came into her life. In this book appear Richard Swiveller and his Marchioness, Sampson and Sarah Brass and Mrs. Jarley, who to be appreciated must be seen and known, as Dickens has drawn them, at full length.

Barnaby Rudge was a half-witted lad, who, not knowing what he did, joined the Gordon rioters — the scenes are laid in the «No Popery» times of 1779 — because he was permitted to carry a flag and to wear a blue ribbon. The history of that exciting period of English semi-political, semi-religious excitement is graphically set down. Prominent figures in the book are Grip the raven, whose cry was «I'm a devil,» «Never say die»; and Miss Dolly Varden, the blooming daughter of the Clerkenwell locksmith, who has given her name to the modern feminine costume of the Watteauesque style.

The literary results of Dickens's first visit to the United States, in 1842, when he was thirty years of age, were ‹American Notes, for General Circulation›; published in that year, and containing portions of ‹Martin Chuzzlewit,› which appeared in 1844. His observations in the ‹Notes› upon the new country and its inhabitants gave great offense to the American people, and were perhaps not in the best taste. He saw the crude and ridiculous side of his hosts, he emphasized their faults, while he paid little attention to their virtues; and his criticisms and strictures rankled in the sensitive American mind for many years.

Martin Chuzzlewit, the hero of the novel bearing his name, spent some time in the western half-settled portion of America, with Mark Tapley, his light-hearted, optimistic friend and companion. The pictures of the morals and the manners of the men and women with whom the emigrants were brought into contact were anything but flattering, and they served to widen the temporary breach between Dickens and his many admirers in the United States. The English scenes of ‹Chuzzlewit› are very powerfully drawn. Tom and Ruth Pinch, Pecksniff, Sarah Gamp, and Betsey Prig are among the leading characters in the work.

In 1843 appeared the ‹Christmas Carol,› the first and perhaps the best of that series of tales of peace and good-will, with which, at the Christmas time, the name of Dickens is so pleasantly and familiarly associated. It was followed by ‹The Chimes› in 1844, by ‹The Cricket on the Hearth› in 1845, by ‹The Haunted Man› in 1848, all the work of Dickens himself; and by other productions written by Dickens in collaboration with other men. Concerning these holiday stories, some unknown writer said in the public press at the time of Dickens's death:—"He has not only pleased us—he has softened the hearts of a whole generation. He made charity fashionable; he awakened pity in the hearts of sixty millions of people. He made a whole generation keep Christmas with acts of helpfulness to the poor; and every barefooted boy and girl in the streets of England and America to-day fares a little better, gets fewer cuffs and more pudding, because Charles Dickens wrote."

In 1846 he produced his 'Pictures from Italy'; 'The Battle of Life, A Love Story,' and began in periodical form his 'Dealings with the Firm of Dombey and Son, Wholesale, Retail, and for Exportation,' published in book form in 1847. Here we have the pathetic story of Little Paul, the tragic fate of Carker, the amusing episode of Jack Bunsby with his designing widow, and the devotion of Susan Nipper, Mr. Toots, Captain Cuttle, and Sol Gills to the gentle, patient, lovable Florence.

On the 'Personal History of David Copperfield,' published in 1850, and of Dickens's share in its plot, something has already been said here. It is perhaps the most popular of all his productions, containing as it does Mr. Dick, the Peggottys, the Micawbers, the Heeps, Betsey Trotwood, Steerforth, Tommy Traddles, Dora, Agnes, and Little Em'ly, in all of whom the world has been so deeply interested for so many years.

'A Child's History of England' and 'Bleak House' saw the light in 1853. The romance was written as a protest and a warning against the law's delays, as exhibited in the Court of Chancery; and it contains the tragedy of Sir Leicester and Lady Dedlock, and the short but touching story of Poor Jo.

'Hard Times,' a tale in one volume, was printed in 1854. It introduces the Gradgrind family.

'Little Dorrit' appeared in 1857. In this book he returns to the Debtor's Prison of Micawber and of his own father. Little Dorrit herself was "the child of the Marshalsea," in which she was born and brought up; and the whole story is an appeal against the injustice of depriving of personal liberty those who cannot pay their bills, or meet their notes, however small. Its prominent characters are the Clennams, mother and son, the Meagleses, Flintwinch, Sir Decimus Tite Barnacle, Rigaud and Little Cavalletto.

'A Tale of Two Cities,' a remarkable departure for Dickens, and unlike any of his other works, was the book of the year 1859. It is conceded, even by those who are not counted among the admirers of its author, to be a most vivid and correct picture of Paris during the time of the Revolution, when the guillotine was the king of France. Its central figure, Sydney Carton, one of the most heroic characters in romance, gives his life to restore his friend to the girl whom they both love.

'The Uncommercial Traveller,' a number of sketches and stories originally published in his weekly journal All the Year Round, appeared in 1860. They were supplemented in 1868 by another volume bearing the same title, and containing eleven other papers collected from the same periodical.

'Great Expectations,' 1861, like 'Copperfield,' is the story of a boy's childhood told by the boy himself, but by a boy with feelings, sentiments, and experiences very different from those of the earlier work. The plot is not altogether a cheerful one, but many of the characters are original and charming; notably Joe Gargery, Jaggles, Wemmick, the exceedingly eccentric Miss Havisham, and the very amiable and simple Biddy.

'Somebody's Luggage,' 1862; 'Mrs. Lirriper's Lodgings,' 1863; 'Mrs. Lirriper's Legacy,' 1864; Dr. Marigold's Prescription,' 1865, 'Mugby Junction,' 1866; and 'No Thoroughfare,' 1867,—Christmas stories, all of them,—were written by Dickens in collaboration with other writers.

'Our Mutual Friend,' the last completed work of Dickens, was printed in 1865. Mr. Boffin, the Golden Dustman with the great heart, Silas Wegg, Mr. Venus, the Riderhoods, Jenny Wren, the Podsnaps, the Veneerings, Betty Higden, Mrs. Wilfer, and the «Boofer Lady,» are as fresh and as original as are any of his creations, and show no trace of the coming disaster.

Before the completion of 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood' Dickens died at his home, Gadshill Place, literally in harness, and without warning, on the 9th of June, 1870.

But six numbers of this last work appeared, in periodical form. Its author left no notes of what was to follow, and the Mystery has never been solved. Mr. Charles Collins, Dickens's son-in-law, however, in a private letter to Mr. Augustin Daly of New York, who had proposed to dramatize the tale, gave some general outline of the scheme for 'Edwin Drood.' «The titular character,» he said, «was never to reappear, he having been murdered by Jasper. The girl Rosa, not having been really attached to Edwin, was not to lament his loss very long, and was, I believe, to admit the sailor, Mr. Tartar, to supply his place. It was intended that Jasper should urge on the search after Edwin, and the pursuit of the murderer, thus endeavoring to divert suspicion from himself, the real murderer. As to anything further, it would be purely conjectural.»

Besides this immense amount of admirable work, Dickens founded, conducted, and edited two successful periodicals, Household Words, established in March 1850, and followed by All the Year Round, beginning in April 1859. To these he contributed many sketches and stories. He began public readings in London in 1858; and continued them with great profit to himself, and with great satisfaction to immense audiences, for upwards of twelve years. He appeared in all the leading cities of Great Britain; and he was enormously popular as a reader in America during his second and last visit in 1868.

As an after-dinner and occasional speaker Dickens was rarely equaled; and as an actor upon the amateur stage, in plays of his own composition, he was inimitable.

Of his attempts at verse, ‘The Ivy Green’ is the only one that is held in remembrance.

A strong argument in favor of what may be called «the staying qualities» of Dickens is the fact that his characters, even in a mutilated, unsatisfactory form, have held the stage for half a century or more, and still have power to attract and move great audiences, wherever is spoken the language in which he wrote. The dramatization of the novel is universally and justly regarded as the most ephemeral and worthless of dramatic production; and the novels of Dickens, on account of their length, of the great number of figures he introduces, of the variety and occasional exaggeration of his dialogues and his situations, have been peculiarly difficult of adaptation to theatrical purposes. Nevertheless the world laughed and cried over Micawber, Captain Cuttle, Dan'l Peggotty, and Caleb Plummer, behind the footlights, years after Dolly Spanker, Aminadab Sleek, Timothy Toodles, Alfred Evelyn, and Geoffrey Dalk, their contemporaries in the standard and legitimate drama, created solely and particularly for dramatic representation, were absolutely forgotten. And Sir Henry Irving, sixty years after the production of ‘Pickwick,’ drew great crowds to see his Alfred Jingle, while that picturesque and ingenious swindler Robert Macaire, Jingle's once famous and familiar confrère in plausible rascality, was never seen on the boards, except as he was burlesqued and caricatured in comic opera.

It is pretty safe to say—and not in a Pickwickian sense—that Pecksniff will live almost as long as hypocrisy lasts; that Heep will not be forgotten while mock humility exists; that Mr. Dick will go down to posterity arm-in-arm with Charles the First, whom he could not avoid in his memorial; that Barkis will be quoted until men cease to be willin'. And so long as cheap, rough coats cover faith, charity, and honest hearts, the world will remember that Captain Cuttle and the Peggottys were so clad.

Laurence Hutton

THE ONE THING NEEDFUL

From ‹Hard Times›

«Now what I want is Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but Facts. Facts alone are wanted in life. Plant nothing else, and root out everything else. You can only form the minds of reasoning animals upon Facts: nothing else will ever be of any service to them. This is the principle on which I bring up my own children, and this is the principle on which I bring up these children. Stick to Facts, sir!»

The scene was a plain, bare, monotonous vault of a schoolroom, and the speaker's square forefinger emphasized his observations by underscoring every sentence with a line on the schoolmaster's sleeve. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's square wall of a forehead, which had his eyebrows for its base, while his eyes found commodious cellarage in two dark caves, overshadowed by the wall. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's mouth, which was wide, thin, and hard set. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's voice, which was inflexible, dry, and dictatorial. The emphasis was helped by the speaker's hair, which bristled on the skirts of his bald head, a plantation of firs to keep the wind from its shining surface, all covered with knobs, like the crust of a plum pie, as if the head had scarcely warehouse-room for the hard facts stored inside. The speaker's obstinate carriage, square coat, square legs, square shoulders,—nay, his very neckcloth, trained to take him by the throat with an unaccommodating grasp like a stubborn fact, as it was,—all helped the emphasis.

«In this life we want nothing but Facts, sir; nothing but Facts!»

The speaker, and the schoolmaster, and the third grown person present, all backed a little, and swept with their eyes the inclined plane of little vessels then and there arranged in order, ready to have imperial gallons of facts poured into them until they were full to the brim.

Thomas Gradgrind, sir. A man of realities. A man of facts and calculations. A man who proceeds upon the principle that two and two are four, and nothing over, and who is not to be talked into allowing for anything over. Thomas Gradgrind, sir,

— peremptorily Thomas,— Thomas Gradgrind. With a rule and a pair of scales, and the multiplication table always in his pocket, sir, ready to weigh and measure any parcel of human nature, and tell you exactly what it comes to. It is a mere question of figures, a case of simple arithmetic. You might hope to get some other nonsensical belief into the head of George Gradgrind, or Augustus Gradgrind, or John Gradgrind, or Joseph Gradgrind (all supposititious, non-existent persons), but into the head of Thomas Gradgrind — no, sir!

In such terms Mr. Gradgrind always mentally introduced himself, whether to his private circle of acquaintance, or to the public in general. In such terms, no doubt, substituting the words «boys and girls,» for «sir,» Thomas Gradgrind now presented Thomas Gradgrind to the little pitchers before him, who were to be filled so full of facts.

Indeed, as he eagerly sparkled at them from the cellarage before mentioned, he seemed a kind of cannon loaded to the muzzle with facts, and prepared to blow them clean out of the regions of childhood at one discharge. He seemed a galvanizing apparatus, too, charged with a grim mechanical substitute for the tender young imaginations that were to be stormed away.

«Girl number twenty,» said Mr. Gradgrind, squarely pointing with his square forefinger; «I don't know that girl. Who is that girl?»

«Sissy Jupe, sir,» explained number twenty, blushing, standing up, and courtesying.

«Sissy is not a name,» said Mr. Gradgrind. «Don't call yourself Sissy. Call yourself Cecilia.»

«It's father as calls me Sissy, sir,» returned the young girl in a trembling voice, and with another courtesy.

«Then he has no business to do it,» said Mr. Gradgrind. «Tell him he mustn't. Cecilia Jupe. Let me see. What is your father?»

«He belongs to the horse-riding, if you please, sir.»

Mr. Gradgrind frowned, and waved off the objectionable calling with his hand.

«We don't want to know anything about that here. You mustn't tell us about that here. Your father breaks horses, don't he?»

«If you please, sir, when they can get any to break, they do break horses in the ring, sir.»

«You mustn't tell us about the ring here. Very well, then. Describe your father as a horsebreaker. He doctors sick horses, I dare say?»

«Oh yes, sir.»

«Very well, then. He is a veterinary surgeon, a farrier, and horsebreaker. Give me your definition of a horse.»

(Sissy Jupe thrown into the greatest alarm by this demand.)

«Girl number twenty unable to define a horse!» said Mr. Gradgrind, for the general behoof of all the little pitchers. «Girl number twenty possessed of no facts in reference to one of the commonest of animals! Some boy's definition of a horse. Bitzer, yours.»

The square finger, moving here and there, lighted suddenly on Bitzer, perhaps because he chanced to sit in the same ray of sunlight which, darting in at one of the bare windows of the intensely whitewashed room, irradiated Sissy. For the boys and girls sat on the face of the inclined plane in two compact bodies, divided up the centre by a narrow interval; and Sissy, being at the corner of a row on the sunny side, came in for the beginning of a sunbeam, of which Bitzer, being at the corner of a row on the other side, a few rows in advance, caught the end. But whereas the girl was so dark-eyed and dark-haired that she seemed to receive a deeper and more lustrous color from the sun when it shone upon her, the boy was so light-eyed and light-haired that the selfsame rays appeared to draw out of him what little color he ever possessed. His cold eyes would hardly have been eyes, but for the short ends of lashes which, by bringing them into immediate contrast with something paler than themselves, expressed their form. His short-cropped hair might have been a mere continuation of the sandy freckles on his forehead and face. His skin was so unwholesomely deficient in the natural tinge, that he looked as though if he were cut he would bleed white.

«Bitzer,» said Thomas Gradgrind. «Your definition of a horse.»

«Quadruped. Graminivorous. Forty teeth; namely, twenty-four grinders, four eye-teeth, and twelve incisive. Sheds coat in the spring; in marshy countries, sheds hoofs, too. Hoofs hard, but requiring to be shod with iron. Age known by marks in mouth.» Thus (and much more) Bitzer.

« Now, girl number twenty,» said Mr. Gradgrind, « you know what a horse is.»

She courtesied again, and would have blushed deeper, if she could have blushed deeper than she had blushed all this time. Bitzer, after rapidly blinking at Thomas Gradgrind with both eyes at once, and so catching the light upon his quivering ends of lashes that they looked like the antennæ of busy insects, put his knuckles to his freckled forehead, and sat down again.

The third gentleman now stepped forth. A mighty man at cutting and drying, he was; a government officer; in his way (and in most other people's too), a professed pugilist; always in training, always with a system to force down the general throat like a bolus, always to be heard of at the bar of his little Public-office, ready to fight all England. To continue in fistic phraseology, he had a genius for coming up to the scratch, wherever and whatever it was, and proving himself an ugly customer. He would go in and damage any subject whatever with his right, follow up with his left, stop, exchange, counter, bore his opponent (he always fought All England) to the ropes, and fall upon him neatly. He was certain to knock the wind out of common-sense, and render that unlucky adversary deaf to the call of time. And he had it in charge from high authority to bring about the great public-office Millennium, when Commissioners should reign upon earth.

« Very well,» said this gentleman, briskly smiling, and folding his arms. « That's a horse. Now, let me ask you girls and boys, Would you paper a room with representations of horses ? »

After a pause one-half of the children cried in chorus, « Yes, sir! » Upon which the other half, seeing in the gentleman's face that Yes was wrong, cried out in chorus, « No, sir! » — as the custom is in these examinations.

« Of course, No. Why wouldn't you ? »

A pause. One corpulent slow boy, with a wheezy manner of breathing, ventured the answer, Because he wouldn't paper a room at all, but would paint it.

« You *must* paper it,» said the gentleman, rather warmly.

« You must paper it,» said Thomas Gradgrind, «whether you like it or not. Don't tell *us* you wouldn't paper it. What do you mean, boy ? »

« I'll explain to you, then,» said the gentleman, after another and dismal pause, « why you wouldn't paper a room with representations of horses. Do you ever see horses walking up and down the sides of rooms in reality — in fact? Do you?»

« Yes, sir!» from one-half. « No, sir!» from the other.

« Of course no,» said the gentleman, with an indignant look at the wrong half. « Why, then, you are not to see anywhere what you don't see in fact; you are not to have anywhere what you don't have in fact. What is called Taste is only another name for Fact.»

Thomas Gradgrind nodded his approbation.

« This is a new principle, a discovery, a great discovery,» said the gentleman. « Now, I'll try you again. Suppose you were going to carpet a room. Would you use a carpet having a representation of flowers upon it?»

There being a general conviction by this time that « No, sir!» was always the right answer to this gentleman, the chorus of No was very strong. Only a few feeble stragglers said Yes; among them Sissy Jupe.

« Girl number twenty,» said the gentleman, smiling in the calm strength of knowledge.

Sissy blushed, and stood up.

« So you would carpet your room — or your husband's room, if you were a grown woman, and had a husband — with representations of flowers, would you?» said the gentleman. « Why would you?»

« If you please, sir, I am very fond of flowers,» returned the girl.

« And is that why you would put tables and chairs upon them, and have people walking over them with heavy boots?»

« It wouldn't hurt them, sir. They wouldn't crush and wither, if you please, sir. They would be the pictures of what was very pretty and pleasant, and I would fancy —»

« Ay, ay, ay! But you mustn't fancy,» cried the gentleman, quite elated by coming so happily to his point. « That's it! You are never to fancy.»

« You are not, Cecilia Jupe,» Thomas Gradgrind solemnly repeated, « to do anything of that kind.»

« Fact, fact, fact!» said the gentleman. And « Fact, fact, fact!» repeated Thomas Gradgrind.

«You are to be in all things regulated and governed,» said the gentleman, «by fact. We hope to have, before long, a board of fact, composed of commissioners of fact, who will force the people to be a people of fact, and of nothing but fact. You must discard the word Fancy altogether. You have nothing to do with it. You are not to have in any object of use or ornament what would be a contradiction in fact. You don't walk upon flowers in fact; you cannot be allowed to walk upon flowers in carpets. You don't find that foreign birds and butterflies come and perch upon your crockery; you cannot be permitted to paint foreign birds and butterflies upon your crockery. You never meet with quadrupeds going up and down walls; you must not have quadrupeds represented upon walls. You must use,» said the gentleman, «for all these purposes, combinations and modifications (in primary colors) of mathematical figures, which are susceptible of proof and demonstration. This is the new discovery. This is fact. This is taste.»

The girl courtesied, and sat down. She was very young, and she looked as if she were frightened by the matter-of-fact prospect the world afforded.

«Now, if Mr. M'Choakumchild,» said the gentleman, «will proceed to give his first lesson here, Mr. Gradgrind, I shall be happy, at your request, to observe his mode of procedure.»

Mr. Gradgrind was much obliged. «Mr. M'Choakumchild, we only wait for you.»

So Mr. M'Choakumchild began in his best manner. He and some one hundred and forty other schoolmasters had been lately turned at the same time, in the same factory, on the same principles, like so many pianoforte legs. He had been put through an immense variety of paces, and had answered volumes of head-breaking questions. Orthography, etymology, syntax, and prosody, biography, astronomy, geography, and general cosmography, the sciences of compound proportion, algebra, land-surveying and leveling, vocal music, and drawing from models, were all at the ends of his ten chilled fingers. He had worked his stony way into her Majesty's most Honorable Privy Council's Schedule B, and had taken the bloom off the higher branches of mathematics and physical science, French, German, Latin, and Greek. He knew all about all the Water Sheds of all the world (whatever they are), and all the histories of all the peoples, and all the names of all the rivers and mountains, and all the productions, manners, and customs of all the countries, and all their boundaries and bearings on the two-and-thirty points of the compass. Ah, rather overdone, M'Choakumchild. If he had only learned a little less, how infinitely better he might have taught much more!

He went to work in this preparatory lesson not unlike Morgiana in the 'Forty Thieves': looking into all the vessels ranged before him, one after another, to see what they contained. Say, good M'Choakumchild. When from thy boiling store thou shalt fill each jar brim-full, by-and-by, dost thou think that thou wilt always kill outright the robber Fancy lurking within — or sometimes only maim him and distort him!

THE BOY AT MUGBY

From 'Mugby Junction'

I AM the boy at Mugby. That's about what *I* am.

You don't know what I mean? What a pity! But I think you do. I think you must. Look here. I am the Boy at what is called The Refreshment Room at Mugby Junction, and what's proudest boast is, that it never yet refreshed a mortal being.

Up in a corner of the Down Refreshment Room at Mugby Junction, in the height of twenty-seven cross draughts (I've often counted 'em while they brush the First Class hair twenty-seven ways), behind the bottles, among the glasses, bounded on the nor'west by the beer, stood pretty far to the right of a metallic object that's at times the tea-urn and at times the soup-tureen, according to the nature of the last twang imparted to its contents, which are the same groundwork, fended off from the traveler by a barrier of stale sponge-cakes erected atop of the counter, and lastly exposed sideways to the glare of Our Missis's eye — you ask a Boy so sitiwated, next time you stop in a hurry at Mugby, for anything to drink; you take particular notice that he'll try to seem not to hear you, that he'll appear in a absent manner to survey the Line through a transparent medium composed of your head and body, and that he won't serve you as long as you can possibly bear it. That's me.

What a lark it is! We are the Model Establishment, we are, at Mugby. Other Refreshment Rooms send their imperfect young ladies up to be finished off by our Missis. For some of the young ladies, when they're new to the business, come into it mild! Ah! Our Missis, she soon takes that out of 'em. Why, I originally come into the business meek myself. But Our Missis, she soon took that out of *me*.

What a delightful lark it is! I look upon us Refreshmenters as ockipying the only proudly independent footing on the Line. There's Papers, for instance,— my honorable friend, if he will allow me to call him so,— him as belongs to Smith's bookstall. Why, he no more dares to be up to our Refreshmenting games than he dares to jump atop of a locomotive with her steam at full pressure, and cut away upon her alone, driving himself, at limited-mail speed. Papers, he'd get his head punched at every compartment, first, second, and third, the whole length of a train, if he was to ventur' to imitate my demeanor. It's the same with the porters, the same with the guards, the same with the ticket clerks, the same the whole way up to the secretary, traffic manager, or very chairman. There ain't a one among 'em on the nobly independent footing we are. Did you ever catch one of *them*, when you wanted anything of him, making a system of surveying the Line through a transparent medium composed of your head and body? I should hope not.

You should see our Bandolining Room at Mugby Junction. It's led to by the door behind the counter, which you'll notice usually stands ajar, and it's the room where Our Missis and our young ladies Bandolines their hair. You should see 'em at it, betwixt trains, Bandolining away, as if they was anointing themselves for the combat. When you're telegraphed you should see their noses all agoing up with scorn, as if it was a part of the working of the same Cooke and Wheatstone electrical machinery. You should hear Our Missis give the word, «Here comes the Beast to be Fed!» and then you should see 'em indignantly skipping across the Line, from the Up to the Down, or Wicer Warsaw, and begin to pitch the stale pastry into the plates, and chuck the sawdust sangwiches under the glass covers, and get out the — ha, ha, ha! — the Sherry,— O my eye, my eye! — for your Refreshment.

It's only in the Isle of the Brave and Land of the Free (by which of course I mean to say Britannia) that Refreshmenting is so effective, so 'olesome, so constitutional a check upon the public. There was a foreigner, which having politely, with his hat off, beseeched our young ladies and Our Missis for «a leetel gloss hoff prarndee,» and having had the Line surveyed through him by all, and no other acknowledgment, was a-proceeding at last to help himself, as seems to be the custom in his own country, when Our Missis, with her hair almost a-coming un-Bandolined with rage, and her eyes omitting sparks, flew at him, cotched the decanter out of his hand, and said, «Put it down! I won't allow that!» The foreigner turned pale, stepped back with his arms stretched out in front of him, his hands clasped, and his shoulders riz, and exclaimed:—«Ah! Is it possible, this! That these disdaineous females and this ferocious old woman are placed here by the administration, not only to empoison the voyagers, but to affront them! Great Heaven! How arrives it? The English people. Or is he then a slave? Or idiot?» Another time a merry, wide-awake American gent had tried the sawdust and spit it out, and had tried the Sherry and spit that out, and had tried in vain to sustain exhausted natur' upon Butter-Scotch, and had been rather extra Bandolined and Line-surveyed through, when as the bell was ringing and he paid Our Missis, he says, very loud and good-tempered:—«I tell Yew what 'tis, ma'arm. I la'af. Theer! I la'af. I Dew. I oughter ha' seen most things, for I hail from the Onlimited side of the Atlantic Ocean, and I haive traveled right slick over the Limited, head on through Jeerusalemm and the East, and likeways France and Italy Europe Old World, and am now upon the track to the Chief Europian Village; but such an Institution as Yew, and Yewer young ladies, and Yewer fixin's solid and liquid, afore the glorious Tarnal I never did see yet! And if I hain't found the eighth wonder of monarchical Creation, in finding Yew, and Yewer young ladies, and Yewer fixin's solid and liquid, all as aforesaid, established in a country where the people air not absolute Loo-naticks, I am Extra Double Darned with a Nip and Frizzle to the innermostest grit! Wheerfur—Theer!—I la'af! I Dew, ma'arm. I la'af!» And so he went, stamping and shaking his sides, along the platform all the way to his own compartment.

I think it was her standing up agin the Foreigner as give Our Missis the idea of going over to France, and droring a comparison betwixt Refreshmenting as followed among the frog-eaters and Refreshmenting as triumphant in the Isle of the Brave and Land of the Free (by which of course I mean to say agin, Britannia). Our young ladies, Miss Whiff, Miss Piff, and Mrs. Sniff, was unanimous opposed to her going: for, as they says to Our Missis one and all, it is well beknown to the hends of the herth as no other nation except Britain has a idea of anythink, but above all of business. Why then should you tire yourself to prove what is a'ready proved? Our Missis, however (being a teazer at all pints), stood out grim obstinate, and got a return pass by Southeastern Tidal, to go right through, if such should be her dispositions, to Marseilles.

Sniff is husband to Mrs. Sniff, and is a regular insignificant cove. He looks arter the sawdust department in a back room, and is sometimes, when we are very hard put to it, let behind the counter with a corkscrew; but never when it can be helped, his demeanor towards the public being disgusting servile. How Mrs. Sniff ever come so far to lower herself as to marry him, I don't know; but I suppose *he* does, and I should think he wished he didn't, for he leads a awful life. Mrs. Sniff couldn't be much harder with him if he was public. Similarly, Miss Whiff and Miss Piff, taking the tone of Mrs. Sniff, they shoulder Sniff about when he *is* let in with a corkscrew, and they whisk things out of his hands when in his servility he is a-going to let the public have 'em, and they snap him up when in the crawling baseness of his spirit he is a-going to answer a public question, and they drore more tears into his eyes than ever the mustard does, which he all day long lays on to the sawdust. (But it ain't strong.) Once when Sniff had the repulsiveness to reach across to get the milkpot to hand over for a baby, I see Our Missis in her rage catch him by both his shoulders, and spin him out into the Bandolining Room.

But Mrs. Sniff — how different! She's the one! She's the one as you'll notice to be always looking another away from you when you look at her. She's the one with the small waist buckled in tight in front, and with the lace cuffs at her wrists, which she puts on the edge of the counter before her, and stands a-smoothing while the public foams. This smoothing the cuffs and looking another way while the public foams is the last accomplishment taught to the young ladies as come to Mugby to be finished by Our Missis; and it's always taught by Mrs. Sniff.

When Our Missis went away upon her journey, Mrs. Sniff was left in charge. She did hold the public in check most beautiful! In all my time, I never see half so many cups of tea given without milk to people as wanted it with, nor half so many cups of tea with milk given to people as wanted it without. When foaming ensued, Mrs. Sniff would say, « Then you'd better settle it among yourselves, and change with one another.» It was a most highly delicious lark. I enjoyed the Refreshmenting business more than ever, and was so glad I had took to it when young.

Our Missis returned. It got circulated among the young ladies, and it, as it might be, penetrated to me through the crevices of the Bandolining Room, that she had Orrors to reveal, if revelations so contemptible could be dignified with the name. Agitation become weakened. Excitement was up in the stirrups. Expectation stood a-tiptoe. At length it was put forth that on our slackest evening in the week, and at our slackest time of that evening betwixt trains, Our Missis would give her views of foreign Refreshmenting, in the Bandolining Room.

It was arranged tasteful for the purpose. The Bandolining table and glass was hid in a corner, a arm-chair was elevated on a packing-case for Our Missis's ockypation, a table and a tumbler of water (no sherry in it, thankee) was placed beside it. Two of the pupils, the season being autumn, and hollyhocks and daliahs being in, ornamented the wall with three devices in those flowers. On one might be read, « MAY ALBION NEVER LEARN »; on another, « KEEP THE PUBLIC DOWN »; on another, « OUR REFRESHMENTING CHARTER.» The whole had a beautiful appearance, with which the beauty of the sentiments corresponded.

On Our Missis's brow was wrote Severity, as she ascended the fatal platform. (Not that that was anythink new.) Miss Whiff and Miss Piff sat at her feet. Three chairs from the Waiting Room might have been perceived by a average eye, in front of her, on which the pupils was accommodated. Behind them a very close observer might have discerned a Boy. Myself.

« Where,» said Our Missis, glancing gloomily around, « is Sniff ? »

« I thought it better,» answered Mrs. Sniff, « that he should not be let come in. He is such an Ass.»

« No doubt,» assented Our Missis. « But for that reason is it not desirable to improve his mind ? »

«Oh, nothing will ever improve *him*,» said Mrs. Sniff.

«However,» pursued Our Missis, «call him in, Ezekiel.»

I called him in. The appearance of the low-minded cove was hailed with disapprobation from all sides, on account of his having brought his corkscrew with him. He pleaded «the force of habit.»

«The force!» said Mrs. Sniff. «Don't let us have you talking about force, for Gracious's sake. There! Do stand still where you are, with your back against the wall.»

He is a smiling piece of vacancy, and he smiled in the mean way in which he will even smile at the public if he gets a chance (language can say no meaner of him), and he stood upright near the door, with the back of his head agin the wall, as if he was a waiting for somebody to come and measure his heighth for the Army.

«I should not enter, ladies,» says Our Missis, «on the revolting disclosures I am about to make, if it was not in the hope that they will cause you to be yet more implacable in the exercise of the power you wield in a constitutional country, and yet more devoted to the constitutional motto which I see before me,»—it was behind her, but the words sounded better so,—«'May Albion never learn!'»

Here the pupils as had made the motto admired it, and cried, «Hear! Hear! Hear!» Sniff, showing an inclination to join in chorus, got himself frowned down by every brow.

«The baseness of the French,» pursued Our Missis, «as displayed in the fawning nature of their Refreshmenting, equals, if not surpasses, anythink as was ever heard of the baseness of the celebrated Bonaparte.»

Miss Whiff, Miss Piff, and me, we drored a heavy breath, equal to saying, «We thought as much!» Miss Whiff and Miss Piff seeming to object to my droring mine along with theirs, I drored another to aggravate 'em.

«Shall I be believed,» says Our Missis, with flashing eyes, «when I tell you that no sooner had I set my foot upon that treacherous shore—»

Here Sniff, either busting out mad, or thinking aloud, says, in a low voice, «Feet. Plural, you know.»

The cowering that come upon him when he was spurned by all eyes, added to his being beneath contempt, was sufficient punishment for a cove so groveling. In the midst of a silence rendered more impressive by the turned-up female noses with which it was pervaded, Our Missis went on:—

«Shall I be believed when I tell you, that no sooner had I landed,» this word with a killing look at Sniff, «on that treacherous shore, then I was ushered into a Refreshment Room where there were—I do not exaggerate—actually eatable things to eat?»

A groan burst from the ladies. I not only did myself the honor of jining, but also of lengthening it out.

«Where there were,» Our Missis added, «not only eatable things to eat, but also drinkable things to drink?»

A murmur, swelling almost into a scream, ariz. Miss Piff, trembling with indignation, called out, «Name!»

«I *will* name,» said Our Missis. «There was roast fowls, hot and cold; there was smoking roast veal surrounded with browned potatoes; there was hot soup with (again I ask, shall I be credited?) nothing bitter in it, and no flour to choke off the consumer; there was a variety of cold dishes set off with jelly; there was salad; there was—mark me!—*fresh* pastry, and that of a light construction; there was a luscious show of fruit; there was bottles and decanters of sound small wine, of every size, and adapted to every pocket; the same odious statement will apply to brandy; and these were set out upon the counter so that all could help themselves.»

Our Missis's lips so quivered, that Mrs. Sniff, though scarcely less convulsed than she were, got up and held the tumbler to them.

«This,» proceeds Our Missis, «was my first unconstitutional experience. Well would it have been if it had been my last and worst. But no. As I proceeded farther into that enslaved and ignorant land, its aspect became more hideous. I need not explain to this assembly the ingredients and formation of the British Refreshment sangwich?»

Universal laughter,—except from Sniff, who as sangwich-cutter, shook his head in a state of the utmost dejection as he stood with it agin the wall.

«Well!» said Our Missis, with dilated nostrils. «Take a fresh, crisp, long, crusty penny loaf made of the whitest and best flour. Cut it longwise through the middle. Insert a fair and nicely fitting slice of ham. Tie a smart piece of ribbon round the middle of the whole to bind it together. Add at one end a neat wrapper of clean white paper by which to hold it. And the universal French Refreshment sangwich busts on your disgusted vision."

A cry of "Shame!" from all — except Sniff, which rubbed his stomach with a soothing hand.

"I need not," said Our Missis, "explain to this assembly the usual formation and fitting of the British Refreshment room?"

No, no, and laughter; Sniff agin shaking his head in low spirits agin the wall.

"Well," said Our Missis, "what would you say to a general decoration of everythink, to hangings (sometimes elegant), to easy velvet furniture, to abundance of little tables, to abundance of little seats, to brisk bright waiters, to great convenience, to a prevailing cleanliness and tastefulness, postively addressing the public, and making the Beast thinking itself worth the pains?"

Contemptous fury on the part of all the ladies. Mrs. Sniff looking as if she wanted somebody to hold her, and everybody else looking as if they'd raypher not.

"Three times," said Our Missis, working herself into a truly terrimenjious state, — "three times did I see these shameful things, only between the coast and Paris, and not counting either: at Hazebroucke, at Arras, at Amiens. But worse remains. Tell me, what would you call a person who should propose in England that there should be kept, say at our own model Mugby Junction, pretty baskets, each holding an assorted cold lunch and dessert for one, each at a certain fixed price, and each within a passenger's power to take away, to empty in the carriage at perfect leisure, and to return at another station fifty or a hundred miles farther on?"

There was disagreement what such a person should be called. Whether revolutionist, atheist, Bright (*I* said him), or Un-English. Miss Piff screeched her shrill opinion last, in the words, "A malignant maniac!"

"I adopt," says Our Missis, "the brand set upon such a person by the righteous indignation of my friend Miss Piff. A malignant maniac. Know, then, that that malignant maniac has sprung from the congenial soil of France, and that his malignant madness was in unchecked action on this same part of my journey."

I noticed that Sniff was rubbing his hands, and that Mrs. Sniff had got her eye upon him. But I did not take more particular notice, owing to the excited state in which the young ladies was, and to feeling myself called upon to keep it up with a howl.

"On my experience south of Paris," said Our Missis, in a deep tone, "I will not expatiate. Too loathsome were the task! But fancy this. Fancy a guard coming round, with the train at full speed, to inquire how many for dinner. Fancy his telegraphing forward the number of diners. Fancy every one expected, and the table elegantly laid for the complete party. Fancy a charming dinner, in a charming room, and the head cook, concerned for the honor of every dish, superintending in his clean white jacket and cap. Fancy the Beast traveling six hundred miles on end, very fast, and with great punctuality, yet being taught to expect all this to be done for it!"

A spirited chorus of "The Beast!"

I noticed that Sniff was agin a-rubbing his stomach with a soothing hand, and that he had drored up one leg. But agin I didn't take particular notice, looking on myself as called upon to stimilate public feeling. It being a lark besides.

"Putting everything together," said Our Missis, "French Refreshmenting comes to this, and oh, it comes to a nice total! First: eatable things to eat, and drinkable things to drink."

A groan from the young ladies, kep' up by me.

"Second: convenience, and even elegance."

Another groan from the young ladies, kep' up by me.

"Third: moderate charges."

This time a groan from me, kep' up by the young ladies.

"Fourth:—and here," says Our Missis, "I claim your angriest sympathy,—attention, common civility, nay, even politeness!"

Me and the young ladies regularly raging mad all together.

"And I cannot in conclusion," says Our Missis with her spitefullest sneer, "give you a completer pictur of that despicable nation (after what I have related), than assuring you that they wouldn't bear our constitutional ways and noble independence at Mugby Junction for a single month, and that they would turn us to the right-about and put another system in our places as soon as look at us; perhaps sooner, for I do not believe they have the good taste to care to look at us twice."

The swelling tumult was arrested in its rise. Sniff, bore away by his servile disposition, had drored up his leg with a higher and a higher relish, and was now discovered to be waving his corkscrew over his head. It was at this moment that Mrs. Sniff, who had kep' her eye upon him like the fabled obelisk, descended on her victim. Our Missis followed them both out, and cries was heard in the sawdust department.

You come into the Down Refreshment Room at the Junction, making believe you don't know me, and I'll pint you out with my right thumb over my shoulder which is Our Missis, and which is Miss Whiff, and which is Miss Piff, and which is Mrs. Sniff But you won't get a chance to see Sniff, because he disappeared that night. Whether he perished, tore to pieces, I cannot say; but his corkscrew alone remains to bear witness to the servility of his disposition.

THE BURNING OF NEWGATE

From 'Barnaby Rudge'

During the whole of this day, every regiment in or near the metropolis was on duty in one or other part of the town; and the regulars and militia, in obedience to the orders which were sent to every barrack and station within twenty-four hours' journey, began to pour in by all the roads. But the disturbances had attained to such a formidable height, and the rioters had grown with impunity to be so audacious, that the sight of this great force, continually augmented by new arrivals, instead of operating as a check, stimulated them to outrages of greater hardihood than any they had yet committed; and helped to kindle a flame in London the like of which had never been beheld, even in its ancient and rebellious times.

All yesterday, and on this day likewise, the commander-in-chief endeavored to arouse the magistrates to a sense of their duty, and in particular the Lord Mayor, who was the faintest-hearted and most timid of them all. With this object, large bodies of the soldiery were several times dispatched to the Mansion House to await his orders: but as he could by no threats or persuasions be induced to give any, and as the men remained in the open street,—fruitlessly for any good purpose, and thrivingly for a very bad one,—these laudable attempts did harm rather than good. For the crowd, becoming speedily acquainted with the Lord Mayor's temper, did not fail to take advantage of it by boasting that even the civil authorities were opposed to the

Papists, and could not find it in their hearts to molest those who were guilty of no other offense. These vaunts they took care to make within the hearing of the soldiers; and they, being naturally loath to quarrel with the people, received their advances kindly enough; answering, when they were asked if they desired to fire upon their countrymen, «No, they would be damned if they did;» and showing much honest simplicity and good-nature. The feeling that the military were No Popery men, and were ripe for disobeying orders and joining the mob, soon became very prevalent in consequence. Rumors of their disaffection, and of their leaning towards the popular cause, spread from mouth to mouth with astonishing rapidity; and whenever they were drawn up idly in the streets or squares there was sure to be a crowd about them, cheering, and shaking hands, and treating them with a great show of confidence and affection.

By this time the crowd was everywhere; all concealment and disguise were laid aside, and they pervaded the whole town. If any man among them wanted money, he had but to knock at the door of a dwelling-house, or walk into a shop, and demand it in the rioters' name, and his demand was instantly complied with. The peaceable citizens being afraid to lay hands upon them singly and alone, it may be easily supposed that when gathered together in bodies they were perfectly secure from interruption. They assembled in the streets, traversed them at their will and pleasure, and publicly concerted their plans. Business was quite suspended; the greater part of the shops were closed; most of the houses displayed a blue flag in token of their adherence to the popular side; and even the Jews in Houndsditch, Whitechapel, and those quarters, wrote upon their doors or window-shutters, «This House is a True Protestant.» The crowd was the law, and never was the law held in greater dread or more implicitly obeyed.

It was about six o'clock in the evening when a vast mob poured into Lincoln's Inn Fields by every avenue, and divided—evidently in pursuance of a previous design—into several parties. It must not be understood that this arrangement was known to the whole crowd, but that it was the work of a few leaders who, mingling with the men as they came upon the ground, and calling to them to fall into this or that party, effected it as rapidly as if it had been determined on by a council of the whole number, and every man had known his place.

It was perfectly notorious to the assemblage that the largest body, which comprehended about two-thirds of the whole, was designed for the attack on Newgate. It comprehended all the rioters who had been conspicuous in any of their former proceedings; all those whom they recommended as daring hands and fit for the work; all those whose companions had been taken in the riots; and a great number of people who were relatives or friends of felons in the jail. This last class included not only the most desperate and utterly abandoned villains in London, but some who were comparatively innocent. There was more than one woman there, disguised in man's attire, and bent upon the rescue of a child or brother. There were the two sons of a man who lay under sentence of death, and who was to be executed along with three others, on the next day but one. There was a great party of boys whose fellow pickpockets were in the prison; and at the skirts of all, a score of miserable women, outcasts from the world, seeking to release some other fallen creature as miserable as themselves, or moved by a general sympathy perhaps — God knows — with all who were without hope and wretched.

Old swords, and pistols without ball or powder; sledge-hammers, knives, axes, saws, and weapons pillaged from the butchers' shops; a forest of iron bars and wooden clubs; long ladders for scaling the walls, each carried on the shoulders of a dozen men; lighted torches; tow smeared with pitch, and tar, and brimstone; staves roughly plucked from fence and paling; and even crutches taken from crippled beggars in the streets, composed their arms. When all was ready, Hugh and Dennis, with Simon Tappertit between them, led the way. Roaring and chafing like an angry sea, the crowd pressed after them.

Instead of going straight down Holborn to the jail, as all expected, their leaders took the way to Clerkenwell, and pouring down a quiet street, halted before a locksmith's house — the Golden Key. . . .

The locksmith was taken to the head of the crowd, and required to walk between his two conductors; the whole body was put in rapid motion; and without any shouting or noise they bore down straight on Newgate and halted in a dense mass before the prison gate.

Breaking the silence they had hitherto preserved, they raised a great cry as soon as they were ranged before the jail, and demanded to speak with the governor. Their visit was not wholly unexpected, for his house, which fronted the street, was strongly barricaded, the wicket-gate of the prison was closed up, and at no loophole or grating was any person to be seen. Before they had repeated their summons many times, a man appeared upon the roof of the governor's house, and asked what it was they wanted.

Some said one thing, some another, and some only groaned and hissed. It being now nearly dark, and the house high, many persons in the throng were not aware that any one had come to answer them, and continued their clamor until the intelligence was gradually diffused through the whole concourse. Ten minutes or more elapsed before any one voice could be heard with tolerable distinctness; during which interval the figure remained perched alone, against the summer evening sky, looking down into the troubled street.

«Are you,» said Hugh at length, «Mr. Akerman, the head jailer here?»

«Of course he is, brother,» whispered Dennis. But Hugh, without minding him, took his answer from the man himself.

«Yes,» he said; «I am.»

«You have got some friends of ours in your custody, master.»

«I have a good many people in my custody.» He glanced downward as he spoke, into the jail; and the feeling that he could see into the different yards, and that he overlooked everything which was hidden from their view by the rugged walls, so lashed and goaded the mob that they howled like wolves.

«Deliver up our friends,» said Hugh, «and you may keep the rest.»

«It's my duty to keep them all. I shall do my duty.»

«If you don't throw the doors open, we shall break 'em down,» said Hugh; «for we will have the rioters out.»

«All I can do, good people,» Akerman replied, «is to exhort you to disperse; and to remind you that the consequences of any disturbance in this place will be very severe, and bitterly repented by most of you, when it is too late.»

He made as though he would retire when he had said these words, but he was checked by the voice of the locksmith.

«Mr. Akerman!» cried Gabriel, «Mr. Akerman!»

«I will hear no more from any of you,» replied the governor, turning towards the speaker, and waving his hand.

«But I am not one of them,» said Gabriel. «I am an honest man, Mr. Akerman; a respectable tradesman — Gabriel Varden, the locksmith. You know me?»

«You among the crowd!» cried the governor in an altered voice.

«Brought here by force — brought here to pick the lock of the great door for them,» rejoined the locksmith. «Bear witness for me, Mr. Akerman, that I refuse to do it; and that I will not do it, come what may of my refusal. If any violence is done to me, please to remember this.»

«Is there no way of helping you?» said the governor.

«None, Mr. Akerman. You'll do your duty, and I'll do mine. Once again, you robbers and cut-throats,» said the locksmith, turning round upon them, «I refuse. Ah! Howl till you're hoarse. I refuse.»

«Stay — stay!» said the jailer, hastily. «Mr. Varden, I know you for a worthy man, and one who would do no unlawful act except upon compulsion —»

«Upon compulsion, sir,» interposed the locksmith, who felt that the tone in which this was said conveyed the speaker's impression that he had ample excuse for yielding to the furious multitude who beset and hemmed him in on every side, and among whom he stood, an old man, quite alone,—«upon compulsion, sir, I'll do nothing.»

«Where is that man,» said the keeper, anxiously, «who spoke to me just now?»

«Here!» Hugh replied.

«Do you know what the guilt of murder is, and that by keeping that honest tradesman at your side you endanger his life!»

«We know it very well,» he answered; «for what else did we bring him here? Let's have our friends, master, and you shall have your friend. Is that fair, lads?»

The mob replied to him with a loud hurrah!

«You see how it is, sir,» cried Varden. «Keep 'em out, in King George's name. Remember what I have said. Good-night!»

There was no more parley. A shower of stones and other missiles compelled the keeper of the jail to retire; and the mob, pressing on, and swarming round the walls, forced Gabriel Varden close up to the door.

In vain the basket of tools was laid upon the ground before him, and he was urged in turn by promises, by blows, by offers of reward and threats of instant death, to do the office for which they had brought him there. «No,» cried the sturdy locksmith, «I will not.»

He had never loved his life so well as then, but nothing could move him. The savage faces that glared upon him, look where he would; the cries of those who thirsted like wild animals for his blood; the sight of men pressing forward, and trampling down their fellows, as they strove to reach him, and struck at him above the heads of other men, with axes and with iron bars; all failed to daunt him. He looked from man to man and face to face, and still, with quickened breath and lessening color, cried firmly, «I will not!»

Dennis dealt him a blow upon the face which felled him to the ground. He sprang up again like a man in the prime of life, and with blood upon his forehead caught him by the throat.

«You cowardly dog!» he said: «Give me my daughter! Give me my daughter!»

They struggled together. Some cried «Kill him!» and some (but they were not near enough) strove to trample him to death. Tug as he would at the old man's wrists, the hangman could not force him to unclinch his hands.

«Is this all the return you make me, you ungrateful monster?» he articulated with great difficulty, and with many oaths.

«Give me my daughter!» cried the locksmith, who was now as fierce as those who gathered round him; «give me my daughter!»

He was down again, and up, and down once more, and buffeting with a score of them, who bandied him from hand to hand, when one tall fellow, fresh from a slaughter-house, whose dress and great thigh-boots smoked hot with grease and blood, raised a pole-axe, and swearing a horrible oath, aimed it at the old man's uncovered head. At that instant, and in the very act, he fell himself, as if struck by lightning, and over his body a one-armed man came darting to the locksmith's side. Another man was with him, and both caught the locksmith roughly in their grasp.

«Leave him to us!» they cried to Hugh—struggling as they spoke, to force a passage backward through the crowd. «Leave him to us. Why do you waste your whole strength on such as he, when a couple of men can finish him in as many minutes! You lose time. Remember the prisoners! remember Barnaby!»

The cry ran through the mob. Hammers began to rattle on the walls; and every man strove to reach the prison, and be among the foremost rank. Fighting their way through the press and struggle, as desperately as if they were in the midst of enemies rather than their own friends, the two men retreated with the locksmith between them, and dragged him through the very heart of the concourse.

And now the strokes began to fall like hail upon the gate and on the strong building; for those who could not reach the door spent their fierce rage on anything—even on the great blocks of stone, which shivered their weapons into fragments, and made their hands and arms to tingle as if the walls were active in their stout resistance, and dealt them back their blows. The clash of iron ringing upon iron mingled with the deafening tumult and sounded high above it, as the great sledge-hammers rattled on the nailed and plated door: the sparks flew off in showers; men worked in gangs, and at short intervals relieved each other, that all their strength might be devoted to the work; but there stood the portal still, as grim and dark and strong as ever, and saving for the dints upon its battered surface, quite unchanged.

While some brought all their energies to bear upon this toilsome task, and some, rearing ladders against the prison, tried to clamber to the summit of the walls they were too short to scale, and some again engaged a body of police a hundred strong, and beat them back and trod them under foot by force of numbers, others besieged the house on which the jailer had appeared, and driving in the door, brought out his furniture and piled it up against the prison gate to make a bonfire which should burn it down. As soon as this device was understood, all those who had labored hitherto cast down their tools and helped to swell the heap, which reached half-way across the street, and was so high that those who threw more fuel on the top got up by ladders. When all the keeper's goods were flung upon this costly pile, to the last fragment, they smeared it with the pitch and tar and rosin they had brought, and sprinkled it with turpentine.

To all the woodwork round the prison doors they did the like, leaving not a joist or beam untouched. This infernal christening performed, they fired the pile with lighted matches and with blazing tow, and then stood by, awaiting the result.

The furniture being very dry and rendered more combustible by wax and oil, besides the arts they had used, took fire at once. The flames roared high and fiercely, blackening the prison wall, and twining up its lofty front like burning serpents. At first they crowded round the blaze, and vented their exultation only in their looks; but when it grew hotter and fiercer—when it crackled, leaped, and roared, like a great furnace—when it shone upon the opposite houses and lighted up not only the pale and wondering faces at the windows, but the inmost corners of each habitation—when, through the deep red heat and glow, the fire was seen sporting and toying with the door, now clinging to its obdurate surface, now gliding off with fierce inconstancy and soaring high into the sky, anon returning to fold it in its burning grasp and lure it to its ruin—when it shone and gleamed so brightly that the church clock of St. Sepulchre's, so often pointing to the hour of death, was legible as in broad day, and the vane upon its steeple-top glittered in the unwonted light like something richly jeweled—when blackened stone and sombre brick grew ruddy in the deep reflection, and windows shone like burnished gold, dotting the longest distance in the fiery vista with their specks of brightness—when wall and tower and roof and chimney-stack seemed drunk, and in the flickering glare appeared to reel and stagger—when scores of objects, never seen before, burst out upon the view, and things the most familiar put on some new aspect—then the mob began to join the whirl, and with loud yells, and shouts, and clamor, such as happily is seldom heard, bestirred themselves to feed the fire and keep it at its height.

Although the heat was so intense that the paint on the houses over against the prison parched and crackled up, and swelling into boils as it were, from excess of torture, broke and crumbled away; although the glass fell from the window-sashes, and the lead and iron on the roofs blistered the incautious hand that touched them, and the sparrows in the eaves took wing, and rendered giddy by the smoke, fell fluttering down upon the blazing pile;—still the fire was tended unceasingly by busy hands, and round it men were going always. They never slackened in their zeal, or kept aloof, but pressed upon the flames so hard that those in front had much ado to save themselves from being thrust in; if one man swooned or dropped, a dozen struggled for his place, and that, although they knew the pain and thirst and pressure to be unendurable. Those who fell down in fainting fits, and were not crushed or burned, were carried to an inn-yard close at hand, and dashed with water from a pump; of which buckets full were passed from man to man among the crowd; but such was the strong desire of all to drink, and such the fighting to be first, that for the most part the whole contents were spilled upon the ground, without the lips of one man being moistened.

Meanwhile, and in the midst of all the roar and outcry, those who were nearest to the pile heaped up again the burning fragments that came toppling down, and raked the fire about the door, which, although a sheet of flame, was still a door fast locked and barred, and kept them out. Great pieces of blazing wood were passed, besides, above the people's heads to such as stood about the ladders, and some of these, climbing up to the topmost stave, and holding on with one hand by the prison wall, exerted all their skill and force to cast these fire-brands on the roof, or down into the yards within. In many instances their efforts were successful, which occasioned a new and appalling addition to the horrors of the scene; for the prisoners within, seeing from between their bars that the fire caught in many places and thrived fiercely, and being all locked up in strong cells for the night, began to know that they were in danger of being burned alive. This terrible fear, spreading from cell to cell and from yard to yard, vented itself in such dismal cries and wailings, and in such dreadful shrieks for help, that the whole jail resounded with the noise; which was loudly heard even above the shouting of the mob and roaring of the flames, and was so full of agony and despair that it made the boldest tremble. . . .

The women who were looking on shrieked loudly, beat their hands together, stopped their ears, and many fainted; the men who were not near the walls and active in the siege, rather than do nothing tore up the pavement of the street, and did so with a haste and fury they could not have surpassed if that had been the jail, and they were near their object. Not one living creature in the throng was for an instant still. The whole great mass were mad.

A shout! Another! Another yet, though few knew why, or what it meant. But those around the gate had seen it slowly yield, and drop from its topmost hinge. It hung on that side by but one, but it was upright still because of the bar, and its having sunk of its own weight into the heap of ashes at its foot. There was now a gap at the top of the doorway, through which could be descried a gloomy passage, cavernous and dark. Pile up the fire!

It burned fiercely. The door was red-hot, and the gap wider. They vainly tried to shield their faces with their hands, and standing as if in readiness for a spring, watched the place. Dark figures, some crawling on their hands and knees, some carried in the arms of others, were seen to pass along the roof. It was plain the jail could hold out no longer. The keeper and his officers, and their wives and children, were escaping. Pile up the fire!

The door sank down again: it settled deeper in the cinders—tottered—yielded—was down!

As they shouted again, they fell back for a moment, and left a clear space about the fire that lay between them and the jail entry. Hugh leaped upon the blazing heap, and scattering a train of sparks into the air, and making the dark lobby glitter with those that hung upon his dress, dashed into the jail.

The hangman followed. And then so many rushed upon their track that the fire got trodden down and thinly strewn about the street; but there was no need of it now, for inside and out, the prison was in flames.

During the whole course of the terrible scene which was now at its height, one man in the jail suffered a degree of fear and mental torment which had no parallel in the endurance even of those who lay under sentence of death.

When the rioters first assembled before the building, the murderer was roused from sleep—if such slumbers as his may have that blessed name—by the roar of voices, and the struggling of a great crowd. He started up as these sounds met his ear, and sitting on his bedstead, listened.

After a short interval of silence the noise burst out again. Still listening attentively, he made out in course of time that the jail was besieged by a furious multitude. His guilty conscience instantly arrayed these men against himself, and brought the fear upon him that he would be singled out and torn to pieces.

Once impressed with the terror of this conceit, everything tended to confirm and strengthen it. His double crime, the circumstances under which it had been committed, the length of time that had elapsed, and its discovery in spite of all, made him as it were the visible object of the Almighty's wrath. In all the crime and vice and moral gloom of the great pest-house of the capital, he stood alone, marked and singled out by his great guilt, a Lucifer among the devils. The other prisoners were a host, hiding and sheltering each other — a crowd like that without the walls. He was one man against the whole united concourse; a single, solitary, lonely man, from whom the very captives in the jail fell off and shrunk appalled.

It might be that the intelligence of his capture having been bruited abroad, they had come there purposely to drag him out and kill him in the street; or it might be that they were the rioters, and in pursuance of an old design had come to sack the prison. But in either case he had no belief or hope that they would spare him. Every shout they raised and every sound they made was a blow upon his heart. As the attack went on, he grew more wild and frantic in his terror; tried to pull away the bars that guarded the chimney and prevented him from climbing up; called loudly on the turnkeys to cluster round the cell and save him from the fury of the rabble, or put him in some dungeon underground, no matter of what depth, how dark it was, or loathsome, or beset with rats and creeping things, so that it hid him and was hard to find.

But no one came, or answered him. Fearful, even while he cried to them, of attracting attention, he was silent. By-and-by he saw, as he looked from his grated window, a strange glimmering on the stone walls and pavement of the yard. It was feeble at first, and came and went, as though some officers with torches were passing to and fro upon the roof of the prison. Soon it reddened, and lighted brands came whirling down, spattering the ground with fire, and burning sullenly in corners. One rolled beneath a wooden bench and set it in a blaze; another caught a water-spout, and so went climbing up the wall, leaving a long straight track of fire behind it. After a time, a slow thick shower of burning fragments, from some upper portion of the prison which was blazing nigh, began to fall before his door. Remembering that it opened outwards, he knew that every spark which fell upon the heap, and in the act lost its bright life and died an ugly speck of dust and rubbish, helped to entomb him in a living grave. Still, though the jail resounded with shrieks and cries for help,—though the fire bounded up as if each separate flame had had a tiger's life, and roared as though in every one there were a hungry voice—though the heat began to grow intense, and the air suffocating, and the clamor without increased, and the danger of his situation even from one merciless element was every moment more extreme,—still he was afraid to raise his voice again, lest the crowd should break in, and should, of their own ears or from the information given them by the other prisoners, get the clew to his place of confinement. Thus fearful alike of those within the prison and of those without; of noise and silence; light and darkness; of being released, and being left there to die: he was so tortured and tormented, that nothing man has ever done to man in the horrible caprice of power and cruelty, exceeds his self-inflicted punishment.

Now, now, the door was down. Now they came rushing through the jail, calling to each other in the vaulted passages; clashing the iron gates dividing yard from yard; beating at the doors of cells and wards; wrenching off bolts and locks and bars; tearing down the doorposts to get men out; endeavoring to drag them by main force through gaps and windows where a child could scarcely pass; whooping and yelling without a moment's rest; and running through the heat and flames as if they were cased in metal. By their legs, their arms, the hair upon their heads, they dragged the prisoners out. Some threw themselves upon the captives as they got towards the door, and tried to file away their irons; some danced about them with a frenzied joy, and rent their clothes, and were ready, as it seemed, to tear them limb from limb. Now a party of a dozen men came darting through the yard into which the murderer cast fearful glances from his darkened window; dragging a prisoner along the ground, whose dress they had nearly torn from his body in their mad eagerness to set him free, and who was bleeding and senseless in their hands. Now a score of prisoners ran to and fro, who had lost themselves in the intricacies of the prison, and were so bewildered with the noise and glare that they knew not where to turn or what to do, and still cried out for help as loudly as before. Anon some famished wretch, whose theft had been a loaf of bread or scrap of butcher's meat, came skulking past, barefooted — going slowly away because that jail, his house, was burning; not because he had any other, or had friends to meet, or old haunts to revisit, or any liberty to gain but liberty to starve and die. And then a knot of highwaymen went trooping by, conducted by the friends they had among the crowd, who muffled their fetters as they went along with handkerchiefs and bands of hay, and wrapped them in coats and cloaks, and gave them drink from bottles, and held it to their lips, because of their handcuffs which there was no time to remove. All this, and Heaven knows how much more, was done amidst a noise, a hurry, and distraction, like nothing that we know of even in our dreams; which seemed forever on the rise, and never to decrease for the space of a single instant.

He was still looking down from his window upon these things, when a band of men with torches, ladders, axes, and many kinds of weapons, poured into the yard, and hammering at his door, inquired if there were any prisoner within. He left the window when he saw them coming, and drew back into the remotest corner of the cell; but although he returned them no answer, they had a fancy that some one was inside, for they presently set ladders against it, and began to tear away the bars at the casement; not only that, indeed, but with pickaxes to hew down the very stones in the wall.

As soon as they had made a breach at the window, large enough for the admission of a man's head, one of them thrust in a torch and looked all round the room. He followed this man's gaze until it rested on himself, and heard him demand why he had not answered, but made him no reply.

In the general surprise and wonder, they were used to this; without saying anything more, they enlarged the breach until it was large enough to admit the body of a man, and then came dropping down upon the floor, one after another, until the cell was full. They caught him up among them, handed him to the window, and those who stood upon the ladders passed him down upon the pavement of the yard. Then the rest came out, one after another, and bidding him fly and lose no time, or the way would be choked up, hurried away to rescue others.

It seemed not a minute's work from first to last. He staggered to his feet, incredulous of what had happened, when the yard was filled again, and a crowd rushed on, hurrying Barnaby among them. In another minute — not so much: another minute! the same instant, with no lapse or interval between! — he and his son were being passed from hand to hand, through the dense crowd in the street, and were glancing backward at a burning pile which some one said was Newgate. . . .

When he [the hangman] had issued his instructions relative to every other part of the building, and the mob were dispersed from end to end, and busy at their work, he took a bundle of keys from a kind of cupboard in the wall, and going by a private passage near the chapel (it joined the governor's house, and was then on fire), betook himself to the condemned cells, which were a series of small, strong, dismal rooms, opening on a low gallery, guarded at the end at which he entered by a strong iron wicket, and at its opposite extremity by two doors and a thick grate. Having double-locked the wicket and assured himself that the other entrances were well secured, he sat down on a bench in the gallery and sucked the head of his stick with an air of the utmost complacency, tranquillity, and contentment.

It would have been strange enough, a man's enjoying himself in this quiet manner while the prison was burning and such a tumult was cleaving the air, though he had been outside the walls. But here in the very heart of the building, and moreover, with the prayers and cries of the four men under sentence sounding in his ears, and their hands, stretched out through the gratings in their cell doors, clasped in frantic entreaty before his very eyes, it was particularly remarkable. Indeed, Mr. Dennis appeared to think it an uncommon circumstance, and to banter himself upon it; for he thrust his hat on one side as some men do when they are in a waggish humor, sucked the head of his stick with a higher relish, and smiled as though he would say: — « Dennis, you're a rum dog; you're a queer fellow; you're capital company, Dennis, and quite a character! »

He sat in this way for some minutes, while the four men in the cells, certain that somebody had entered the gallery but unable to see who, gave vent to such piteous entreaties as wretches in their miserable condition may be supposed to have been inspired with; urging whoever it was to set them at liberty, for the love of Heaven; and protesting with great fervor, and truly enough perhaps for the time, that if they escaped they would amend their ways, and would never, never, never again do wrong before God or man, but would lead penitent and sober lives, and sorrowfully repent the crimes they had committed. The terrible energy with which they spoke would have moved any person, no matter how good or just (if any good or just person could have strayed into that sad place that night), to set them at liberty, and while he would have left any other punishment to its free course, to save them from this last dreadful and repulsive penalty; which never turned a man inclined to evil, and has hardened thousands who were half inclined to good.

Mr. Dennis, who had been bred and nurtured in the good old school, and had administered the good old laws on the good old plan, always once and sometimes twice every six weeks, for a long time bore these appeals with a deal of philosophy. Being at last, however, rather disturbed in his pleasant reflection by their repetition, he rapped at one of the doors with his stick, and cried,—

"Hold your noise there, will you?" . . .

Mr. Dennis resumed in a sort of coaxing tone:—

"Now look'ee here, you four. I'm come here to take care of you, and see that you ain't burnt, instead of the other thing. It's no use you making any noise, for you won't be found out by them as has broken in, and you'll only be hoarse when you come to the speeches,— which is a pity. What I say in respect to the speeches always is, 'Give it mouth.' That's my maxim. Give it mouth. I've heerd," said the hangman, pulling off his hat to take his handkerchief from the crown and wipe his face, and then putting it on again a little more on one side than before, "I've heerd a eloquence on them boards,—you know what boards I mean,—and have heerd a degree of mouth given to them speeches, that they was as clear as a bell, and as good as a play. There's a pattern! And always, when a thing of this natur's to come off, what I stand up for is a proper frame of mind. Let's have a proper frame of mind, and we can go through with it, creditable—pleasant—sociable. Whatever you do (and I address myself in particular to you in the furthest), never snivel. I'd sooner by half, though I lose by it, see a man tear his clothes a-purpose to spile 'em before they come to me, than find him sniveling. It is ten to one a better frame of mind, every way!"

MONSEIGNEUR

From ‹A Tale of Two Cities›

Monseigneur, one of the great lords in power at the Court, held his fortnightly reception in his grand hotel in Paris. Monseigneur was in his inner room, his sanctuary of sanctuaries, the Holiest of Holiests to the crowd of worshipers in the suite of rooms without. Monseigneur was about to take his chocolate. Monseigneur could swallow a great many things with ease, and was by some few sullen minds supposed to be rather rapidly swallowing France; but his morning's chocolate could not so much as get into the throat of Monseigneur without the aid of four strong men besides the Cook.

Yes. It took four men, all four ablaze with gorgeous decoration, and the Chief of them unable to exist with fewer than two gold watches in his pocket, emulative of the noble and chaste fashion set by Monseigneur, to conduct the happy chocolate to Monseigneur's lips. One lackey carried the chocolate pot into the sacred presence; a second milled and frothed the chocolate with the little instrument he bore for that function; a third presented the favored napkin; a fourth (he of the two gold watches) poured the chocolate out. It was impossible for Monseigneur to dispense with one of these attendants on the chocolate and hold his high place under the admiring heavens. Deep would have been the blot upon his escutcheon if his chocolate had been ignobly waited on by only three men; he must have died of two.

Monseigneur had been out at a little supper last night, where the Comedy and the Grand Opera were charmingly represented. Monseigneur was out at a little supper most nights, with fascinating company. So polite and so impressible was Monseigneur, that the Comedy and the Grand Opera had far more influence with him in the tiresome articles of state affairs and state secrets than the needs of all France. A happy circumstance for France, as the like always is for all countries similarly favored! — always was for England (by way of example) in the regretted days of the merry Stuart who sold it.

Monseigneur had one truly noble idea of general public business, which was to let everything go on in its own way; of particular public business, Monseigneur had the other truly noble idea that it must all go his way — tend to his own power and pocket. Of his pleasures, general and particular, Monseigneur had the other truly noble idea, that the world was made for them. The text of his order (altered from the original by only a pronoun, which is not much) ran, « The earth and the fullness thereof are mine, saith Monseigneur.»

Yet Monseigneur had slowly found that vulgar embarrassments crept into his affairs, both private and public; and he had, as to both classes of affairs, allied himself perforce with a Farmer-General. As to finances public, because Monseigneur could not make anything at all of them, and must consequently let them out to somebody who could; as to finances private, because Farmers-General were rich, and Monseigneur, after generations of great luxury and expense, was growing poor. Hence Monseigneur had taken his sister from a convent while there was yet time to ward off the impending veil, the cheapest garment she could wear, and had bestowed her as a prize upon a very rich Farmer-General, poor in family. Which Farmer-General, carrying an appropriate cane with a golden apple on the top of it, was now among the company in the outer rooms, much prostrated before by mankind — always excepting superior mankind of the blood of Monseigneur, who, his own wife included, looked down upon him with the loftiest contempt.

A sumptuous man was the Farmer-General. Thirty horses stood in his stables, twenty-four male domestics sat in his halls, six body-women waited on his wife. As one who pretended to do nothing but plunder and forage where he could, the Farmer-General — howsoever his matrimonial relations conduced to social morality — was at least the greatest reality among the personages who attended at the hotel of Monseigneur that day.

For the rooms, though a beautiful scene to look at, and adorned with every device of decoration that the taste and skill of the time could achieve, were in truth not a sound business; considered with any reference to the scarecrows in the rags and nightcaps elsewhere (and not so far off, either, but that the watching towers of Notre-Dame, almost equidistant from the two extremes, could see them both), they would have been an exceedingly uncomfortable business — if that could have been anybody's business, at the house of Monseigneur. Military officers destitute of military knowledge; naval officers with no idea of a ship; civil officers without a notion of affairs; brazen ecclesiastics, of the worst world worldly, with sensual eyes, loose tongues, and looser lives; all totally unfit for their several callings, all lying horribly in pretending to belong to them, but all nearly or remotely of the order of Monseigneur, and therefore foisted on all public employments from which anything was to be got — these were to be told off by the score and the score. People not immediately connected with Monseigneur or the State, yet equally unconnected with anything that was real, or with lives passed in traveling by any straight road to any true earthly end, were no less abundant. Doctors who made great fortunes out of dainty remedies for imaginary disorders that never existed, smiled upon their courtly patients in the ante-chambers of Monseigneur. Projectors who had discovered every kind of remedy for the little evils with which the State was touched, except the remedy of setting to work in earnest to root out a single sin, poured their distracting babble into any ears they could lay hold of, at the reception of Monseigneur. Unbelieving Philosophers who were remodeling the world with words, and making card-towers of Babel to scale the skies with, talked with unbelieving Chemists who had an eye on the transmutation of metals, at this wonderful gathering accumulated by Monseigneur. Exquisite gentlemen of the finest breeding, which was at that remarkable time — and has ever since — to be known by its fruits of indifference to every natural subject of human interest, were in the most exemplary state of exhaustion, at the hotel of Monseigneur. Such homes had these various notabilities left behind them in the fine world of Paris, that the Spies among the assembled devotees of Monseigneur — forming a goodly half of the polite company — would have found it hard to discover among the angels of that sphere one solitary wife who in her manners and appearance owned to being a mother. Indeed, except for the mere act of bringing a troublesome creature into this world — which does not go far towards the realization of the name of mother — there was no such thing known to the fashion. Peasant women kept the unfashionable babies close, and brought them up; and charming grandmammas of sixty dressed and supped as at twenty.

The leprosy of unreality disfigured every human creature in attendance upon Monseigneur. In the outermost room were half a dozen exceptional people who had had, for a few years, some vague misgiving in them that things in general were going rather wrong. As a promising way of setting them right, half of the half-dozen had become members of a fantastic sect of Convulsionists, and were even then considering within themselves whether they should foam, rage, roar, and turn cataleptic on the spot—thereby setting up a highly intelligible finger-post to the Future for Monseigneur's guidance. Besides these Dervishes were other three who had rushed into another sect, which mended matters with a jargon about "the Centre of truth": holding that Man had got out of the Centre of truth—which did not need much demonstration—but had not got out of the Circumference, and that he was to be kept from flying out of the Circumference, and was even to be shoved back into the Centre, by fasting and seeing of spirits. Among these, accordingly, much discoursing with spirits went on—and it did a world of good which never became manifest.

But the comfort was, that all the company at the grand hotel of Monseigneur were perfectly dressed. If the Day of Judgment had only been ascertained to be a dress day, everybody there would have been eternally correct. Such frizzling and powdering and sticking-up of hair, such delicate complexions artificially preserved and mended, such gallant swords to look at, and such delicate honor to the sense of smell, would surely keep anything going for ever and ever. The exquisite gentlemen of the finest breeding wore little pendent trinkets that chinked as they languidly moved; these golden fetters rang like precious little bells; and what with that ringing, and with the rustle of silk and brocade and fine linen, there was a flutter in the air that fanned Saint Antoine and his devouring hunger far away.

Dress was the one unfailing talisman and charm used for keeping all things in their places. Everybody was dressed for a Fancy Ball that was never to leave off. From the Palace of the Tuileries, through Monseigneur and the whole Court, through the Chambers, the Tribunals of Justice, and all society (except the scarecrows), the Fancy Ball descended to the Common Executioner; who in pursuance of the charm was required to officiate "frizzled, powdered, in a gold-laced coat, pumps, and white silk stockings." At the gallows and the wheel—the axe was a rarity—Monsieur Paris,—as it was the episcopal mode among his brother Professors of the provinces, Monsieur Orleans and the rest, to call him,—presided in this dainty dress. And who among the company at Monseigneur's reception in that seventeen-hundred-and-eightieth year of our Lord could possibly doubt that a system rooted in a frizzled hangman, powdered, gold-laced, pumped, and white-silk-stockinged, would see the very stars out!

Monseigneur, having eased his four men of their burdens and taken his chocolate, caused the doors of the Holiest of Holiests to be thrown open, and issued forth. Then what submission, what cringing and fawning, what servility, what abject humiliation! As to bowing down in body and spirit, nothing in that way was left for Heaven — which may have been one among other reasons why the worshipers of Monseigneur never troubled it.

Bestowing a word of promise here and a smile there, a whisper on one happy slave and a wave of the hand on another, Monseigneur affably passed through his rooms to the remote region of the Circumference of Truth. There Monseigneur turned and came back again, and so in due course of time got himself shut up in his sanctuary by the chocolate sprites, and was seen no more.

The show being over, the flutter in the air became quite a little storm, and the precious little bells went ringing down-stairs. There was soon but one person left of all the crowd, and he, with his hat under his arm and his snuff-box in his hand, slowly passed among the mirrors on his way out.

«I devote you,» said this person, stopping at the last door on his way, and turning in the direction of the sanctuary, «to the Devil!»

With that, he shook the snuff from his fingers as if he had shaken the dust from his feet, and quietly walked down-stairs.

He was a man of about sixty, handsomely dressed, haughty in manner, and with a face like a fine mask. A face of a transparent paleness; every feature in it clearly defined; one set expression on it. The nose, beautifully formed otherwise, was very slightly pinched at the top of each nostril. In those two compressions, or dints, the only little change that the face ever showed, resided. They persisted in changing color sometimes, and they would be occasionally dilated and contracted by something like a faint pulsation; then they gave a look of treachery and cruelty to the whole countenance. Examined with attention, its capacity of helping such a look was to be found in the line of the mouth and the lines of the orbits of the eyes, being much too horizontal and thin; still, in the effect the face made, it was a handsome face, and a remarkable one.

Its owner went down-stairs into the courtyard, got into his carriage, and drove away. Not many people had talked with him at the reception; he had stood in a little space apart, and Monseigneur might have been warmer in his manner. It appeared, under the circumstances, rather agreeable to him to see the common people dispersed before his horses, and often barely escaping from being run down. His man drove as if he were charging an enemy, and the furious recklessness of the man brought no check into the face or to the lips of the master. The complaint had sometimes made itself audible, even in that deaf city and dumb age, that in the narrow streets without footways, the fierce patrician custom of hard driving endangered and maimed the mere vulgar in a barbarous manner. But few cared enough for that to think of it a second time, and in this matter, as in all others, the common wretches were left to get out of their difficulties as they could.

With a wild rattle and clatter, and an inhuman abandonment of consideration not easy to be understood in these days, the carriage dashed through streets and swept round corners, with women screaming before it, and men clutching each other and clutching children out of its way. At last, swooping at a street corner by a fountain, one of its wheels came to a sickening little jolt, and there was a loud cry from a number of voices, and the horses reared and plunged.

But for the latter inconvenience, the carriage probably would not have stopped; carriages were often known to drive on and leave their wounded behind; and why not? But the frightened valet had got down in a hurry, and there were twenty hands at the horses' bridles.

"What has gone wrong?" said Monsieur, calmly looking out.

A tall man in a nightcap had caught up a bundle from among the feet of the horses, and had laid it on the basement of the fountain, and was down in the mud and wet, howling over it like a wild animal.

"Pardon, Monsieur the Marquis!" said a ragged and submissive man, "it is a child."

"Why does he make that abominable noise? Is it his child?"

"Excuse me, Monsieur the Marquis—it is a pity—yes."

The fountain was a little removed; for the street opened, where it was, into a space some ten or twelve yards square. As the tall man suddenly got up from the ground and came running at the carriage, Monsieur the Marquis clapped his hand for an instant on his sword-hilt.

«Killed!» shrieked the man in wild desperation, extending both arms at their length above his head, and staring at him. «Dead!»

The people closed round, and looked at Monsieur the Marquis. There was nothing revealed by the many eyes that looked at him but watchfulness and eagerness; there was no visible menacing or anger. Neither did the people say anything; after the first cry they had been silent, and they remained so. The voice of the submissive man who had spoken was flat and tame in its extreme submission. Monsieur the Marquis ran his eyes over them all as if they had been mere rats come out of their holes.

He took out his purse.

«It is extraordinary to me,» said he, «that you people cannot take care of yourselves and your children. One or the other of you is forever in the way. How do I know what injury you have done my horses? See! Give him that.»

He threw out a gold coin for the valet to pick up, and all the heads craned forward that all the eyes might look down at it as it fell. The tall man called out again with a most unearthly cry, «Dead!»

He was arrested by the quick arrival of another man, for whom the rest made way. On seeing him, the miserable creature fell upon his shoulder, sobbing and crying and pointing to the fountain, where some women were stooping over the motionless bundle and moving gently about it. They were as silent, however, as the men.

«I know all, I know all,» said the last comer. «Be a brave man, my Gaspard! It is better for the poor little plaything to die so, than to live. It has died in a moment without pain. Could it have lived an hour as happily?»

«You are a philosopher, you there,» said the Marquis, smiling. «How do they call you?»

«They call me Defarge.»

«Of what trade?»

«Monsieur the Marquis, vendor of wine.»

«Pick up that, philosopher and vendor of wine,» said the Marquis, throwing him another gold coin, «and spend it as you will. The horses there; are they right?»

Without deigning to look at the assemblage a second time, Monsieur the Marquis leaned back in his seat, and was just being driven away with the air of a gentleman who had accidentally broken some common thing, and had paid for it and could afford to pay for it, when his ease was suddenly disturbed by a coin flying into his carriage, and ringing on its floor.

«Hold!» said Monsieur the Marquis. «Hold the horses! Who threw that?»

He looked to the spot where Defarge the vendor of wine had stood, a moment before; but the wretched father was groveling on his face on the pavement in that spot, and the figure that stood beside him was the figure of a dark stout woman, knitting.

«You dogs!» said the Marquis, but smoothly and with an unchanged front, except as to the spots on his nose: «I would ride over any of you very willingly, and exterminate you from the earth. If I knew which rascal threw at the carriage, and if that brigand were sufficiently near it, he should be crushed under the wheels.»

So cowed was their condition, and so long and hard their experience of what such a man could do to them, within the law and beyond it, that not a voice, or a hand, or even an eye was raised. Among the men, not one. But the woman who stood knitting looked up steadily, and looked the Marquis in the face. It was not for his dignity to notice it; his contemptuous eyes passed over her and over all the other rats; and he leaned back in his seat again and gave the word, «Go on!»

He was driven on, and other carriages came whirling by in quick succession; the Minister, the State-Projector, the Farmer-General, the Doctor, the Lawyer, the Ecclesiastic, the Grand Opera, the Comedy, the whole Fancy Ball in a bright continuous flow, came whirling by. The rats had crept out of their holes to look on, and they remained looking on for hours; soldiers and police often passing between them and the spectacle, and making a barrier behind which they slunk, and through which they peeped. The father had long ago taken up his bundle and hidden himself away with it, when the women who had tended the bundle while it lay on the base of the fountain sat there watching the running of the water and the rolling of the Fancy Ball—when the one woman who had stood conspicuous, knitting, still knitted on with the steadfastness of Fate. The water of the fountain ran, the swift river ran, the day ran into evening, so much life in the city ran into death according to rule, time and tide waited for no man, the rats were sleeping close together in their dark holes again, the Fancy Ball was lighted up at supper, all things ran their course.

A BEAUTIFUL landscape, with the corn bright in it but not abundant. Patches of poor rye where corn should have been, patches of poor peas and beans, patches of most coarse vegetable substitutes for wheat. On inanimate nature, as on the men and women who cultivated it, a prevalent tendency towards an appearance of vegetating unwillingly—a dejected disposition to give up and wither away.

Monsieur the Marquis in his traveling carriage (which might have been lighter), conducted by four post-horses and two postilions, fagged up a steep hill. A blush on the countenance of Monsieur the Marquis was no impeachment of his high breeding; it was not from within; it was occasioned by an external circumstance beyond his control—the setting sun.

The sunset struck so brilliantly into the traveling carriage when it gained the hill-top, that its occupant was steeped in crimson. "It will die out," said Monsieur the Marquis, glancing at his hands, "directly."

In effect, the sun was so low that it dipped at the moment. When the heavy drag had been adjusted to the wheel, and the carriage slid down hill, with a cinderous smell, in a cloud of dust, the red glow departed quickly; the sun and the Marquis going down together, there was no glow left when the drag was taken off.

But there remained a broken country, bold and open, a little village at the bottom of the hill, a broad sweep and rise beyond it, a church tower, a windmill, a forest for the chase, and a crag with a fortress on it, used as a prison. Round upon all these darkening objects as the night drew on, the Marquis looked, with the air of one who was coming near home.

The village had its one poor street, with its poor brewery, poor tannery, poor tavern, poor stable-yard for relays of post-horses, poor fountain, all usual poor appointments. It had its poor people too. All its people were poor, and many of them were sitting at their doors, shredding spare onions and the like for supper, while many were at the fountain, washing leaves, and grasses, and any such small yieldings of the earth that could be eaten. Expressive signs of what made them poor were not wanting; the tax for the state, the tax for the church, the tax for the lord, tax local and tax general, were to be paid here and to be paid there, according to solemn inscription in the little village, until the wonder was that there was any village left unswallowed.

Few children were to be seen, and no dogs. As to the men and women, their choice on earth was stated in the prospect — Life on the lowest terms that could sustain it, down in the little village under the mill; or captivity and Death in the dominant prison on the crag.

Heralded by a courier in advance, and by the cracking of his postilions' whips, which twined snake-like about their heads in the evening air, as if he came attended by the Furies, Monsieur the Marquis drew up in his traveling carriage at the posting-house gate. It was hard by the fountain, and the peasants suspended their operations to look at him. He looked at them, and saw in them, without knowing it, the slow sure filing down of misery-worn face and figure, that was to make the meagreness of Frenchmen an English superstition which should survive the truth through the best part of a hundred years.

Monsieur the Marquis cast his eyes over the submissive faces that drooped before him, as the like of himself had drooped before Monseigneur of the Court — only the difference was, that these faces drooped merely to suffer and not to propitiate — when a grizzled mender of the roads joined the group.

« Bring me hither that fellow! » said the Marquis to the courier.

The fellow was brought, cap in hand, and the other fellows closed round to look and listen, in the manner of the people at the Paris fountain.

« I passed you on the road? »

« Monseigneur, it is true. I had the honor of being passed on the road. »

« Coming up the hill, and at the top of the hill, both? »

« Monseigneur, it is true. »

« What did you look at so fixedly? »

« Monseigneur, I looked at the man. »

He stooped a little, and with his tattered blue cap pointed under the carriage. All his fellows stooped to look under the carriage.

« What man, pig? And why look there? »

« Pardon, Monseigneur; he swung by the chain of the shoe — the drag. »

« Who? » demanded the traveler.

« Monseigneur, the man. »

« May the Devil carry away these idiots! How do you call the man? You know all the men of this part of the country. Who was he? »

«Your clemency, Monseigneur! He was not of this part of the country. Of all the days of my life, I never saw him.»

«Swinging by the chain? To be suffocated?»

«With your gracious permission, that was the wonder of it, Monseigneur. His head hanging over—like this!»

He turned himself sideways to the carriage, and leaned back, with his face thrown up to the sky, and his head hanging down; then recovered himself, fumbled with his cap, and made a bow.

«What was he like?»

«Monseigneur, he was whiter than the miller. All covered with dust, white as a spectre, tall as a spectre!»

The picture produced an immense sensation in the little crowd; but all eyes, without comparing notes with other eyes, looked at Monsieur the Marquis. Perhaps to observe whether he had any spectre on his conscience.

«Truly, you did well,» said the Marquis, felicitously sensible that such vermin were not to ruffle him, «to see a thief accompanying my carriage, and not open that great mouth of yours. Bah! Put him aside, Monsieur Gabelle!»

Monsieur Gabelle was the Postmaster and some other taxing functionary, united; he had come out with great obsequiousness to assist at this examination, and had held the examined by the drapery of his arm in an official manner.

«Bah! Go aside!» said Monsieur Gabelle.

«Lay hands on this stranger if he seeks to lodge in your village to-night, and be sure that his business is honest, Gabelle.»

«Monseigneur, I am flattered to devote myself to your orders.»

«Did he run away, fellow?—where is that Accursed?»

The accursed was already under the carriage with some half-dozen particular friends, pointing out the chain with his blue cap. Some half-dozen other particular friends promptly haled him out, and presented him breathless to Monsieur the Marquis.

«Did the man run away, Dolt, when we stopped for the drag?»

«Monseigneur, he precipitated himself over the hill-side, head first, as a person plunges into the river.»

«See to it, Gabelle. Go on!»

The half-dozen who were peering at the chain were still among the wheels, like sheep; the wheels turned so suddenly that they were lucky to save their skins and bones; they had very little else to save, or they might not have been so fortunate.

The burst with which the carriage started out of the village and up the rise beyond was soon checked by the steepness of the hill. Gradually it subsided to a foot pace, swinging and lumbering upward among the many sweet scents of a summer night. The postilions, with a thousand gossamer gnats circling about them in lieu of the Furies, quietly mended the points to the lashes of their whips; the valet walked by the horses; the courier was audible, trotting on ahead into the dim distance.

At the steepest point of the hill there was a little burial-ground, with a Cross and a new large figure of our Saviour on it; it was a poor figure in wood, done by some inexperienced rustic carver, but he had studied the figure from the life — his own life, maybe — for it was dreadfully spare and thin.

To this distressful emblem of a great distress that had long been growing worse and was not at its worst, a woman was kneeling. She turned her head as the carriage came up to her, rose quickly, and presented herself at the carriage door.

« It is you, Monseigneur! Monseigneur, a petition.»

With an exclamation of impatience, but with his unchangeable face, Monseigneur looked out.

«How, then! What is it? Always petitions!»

«Monseigneur. For the love of the great God! My husband, the forester.»

«What of your husband, the forester? Always the same with you people. He cannot pay something?»

«He has paid all, Monseigneur. He is dead.»

«Well! He is quiet. Can I restore him to you?»

«Alas, no, Monseigneur! But he lies yonder, under a little heap of poor grass.»

«Well?»

«Monseigneur, there are so many little heaps of poor grass!»

«Again, well?»

She looked an old woman, but was young. Her manner was one of passionate grief; by turns she clasped her veinous and knotted hands together with wild energy, and laid one of them on the carriage door — tenderly, caressingly, as if it had been a human breast, and could be expected to feel the appealing touch.

«Monseigneur, hear me! Monseigneur, hear my petition! My husband died of want; so many die of want; so many more will die of want.»

«Again, well? Can I feed them?»

« Monseigneur, the good God knows; but I don't ask it. My petition is, that a morsel of stone or wood, with my husband's name, may be placed over him to show where he lies. Otherwise the place will be quickly forgotten; it will never be found when I am dead of the same malady; I shall be laid under some other heap of poor grass. Monseigneur, they are so many, they increase so fast, there is so much want. Monseigneur! Monseigneur! »

The valet had put her away from the door, the carriage had broken into a brisk trot, the postilions had quickened the pace; she was left far behind, and Monseigneur, again escorted by the Furies, was rapidly diminishing the league or two of distance that remained between him and his château.

The sweet scents of the summer night rose all around him, and rose, as the rain falls, impartially, on the dusty, ragged, and toil-worn group at the fountain not far away; to whom the mender of roads, with the aid of the blue cap without which he was nothing, still enlarged upon his man like a spectre as long as they could bear it. By degrees, as they could bear no more, they dropped off one by one, and lights twinkled in little casements; which lights, as the casements darkened, and more stars came out, seemed to have shot up into the sky instead of having been extinguished.

The shadow of a large high-roofed house, and of many overhanging trees, was upon Monsieur the Marquis by that time; and the shadow was exchanged for the light of a flambeau, as his carriage stopped, and the great door of his château was opened to him.

« Monsieur Charles, whom I expect; is he arrived from England? »

« Monseigneur, not yet. »

THE GORGON'S HEAD

It was a heavy mass of building, that château of Monsieur the Marquis, with a large stone court-yard before it, and two stone sweeps of staircase meeting in a stone terrace before the principal door. A stony business altogether, with heavy stone balustrades, and stone urns, and stone flowers, and stone faces of men, and stone heads of lions, in all directions. As if the Gorgon's head had surveyed it when it was finished two centuries ago.

Up the broad flight of shallow steps, Monsieur the Marquis, flambeau-preceded, went from his carriage, sufficiently disturbing the darkness to elicit loud remonstrance from an owl in the roof of the great pile of stable-building away among the trees. All else was so quiet that the flambeau carried up the steps, and the other flambeau held at the great door, burnt as if they were in a close room of state, instead of being in the open night air. Other sound than the owl's voice there was none, save the falling of a fountain into its stone basin; for it was one of those dark nights that hold their breath by the hour together, and then heave a long low sigh, and hold their breath again.

The great door clanged behind him, and Monsieur the Marquis crossed a hall grim with certain old boar-spears, swords, and knives of the chase; grimmer with certain heavy riding-rods and riding-whips, of which many a peasant, gone to his benefactor Death, had felt the weight when his lord was angry.

Avoiding the larger rooms, which were dark and made fast for the night, Monsieur the Marquis, with his flambeau-bearer going on before, went up the staircase to a door in a corridor. This thrown open admitted him to his own private apartment of three rooms; his bedchamber and two others. High vaulted rooms with cool uncarpeted floors, great dogs upon the hearths for the burning of wood in winter-time, and all luxuries befitting the state of a marquis in a luxurious age and country. The fashion of the last Louis but one, of the line that was never to break — the fourteenth Louis — was conspicuous in their rich furniture; but it was diversified by many objects that were illustrations of old pages in the history of France.

A supper-table was laid for two, in the third of the rooms; a round room, in one of the château's four extinguisher-topped towers. A small lofty room, with its window wide open, and the wooden jalousie-blinds closed, so that the dark night only showed in slight horizontal lines of black, alternating with their broad lines of stone-color.

« My nephew, » said the Marquis, glancing at the supper preparation; « they said he was not arrived. »

Nor was he; but he had been expected with Monseigneur.

« Ah! It is not probable he will arrive to-night; nevertheless, leave the table as it is. I shall be ready in a quarter of an hour. »

In a quarter of an hour Monseigneur was ready, and sat down alone to his sumptuous and choice supper. His chair was opposite to the window, and he had taken his soup and was raising his glass of Bordeaux to his lips, when he put it down.

«What is that?» he calmly asked, looking with attention at the horizontal lines of black and stone-color.

«Monseigneur? That?»

«Outside the blinds. Open the blinds.»

It was done.

«Well?»

«Monseigneur, it is nothing. The trees and the night are all that are here.»

The servant who spoke had thrown the blinds wide, had looked out into the vacant darkness, and stood, with that blank behind him, looking round for instructions.

«Good,» said the imperturbable master. «Close them again.»

That was done too, and the Marquis went on with his supper. He was half-way through it, when he again stopped with his glass in his hand, hearing the sound of wheels. It came on briskly, and came up to the front of the château.

«Ask who is arrived.»

It was the nephew of Monseigneur. He had been some few leagues behind Monseigneur, early in the afternoon. He had diminished the distance rapidly, but not so rapidly as to come up with Monseigneur on the road. He had heard of Monseigneur, at the posting-houses, as being before him.

He was to be told (said Monseigneur) that supper awaited him then and there, and that he was prayed to come to it. In a little while he came. He had been known in England as Charles Darnay.

Monseigneur received him in a courtly manner, but they did not shake hands.

«You left Paris yesterday, sir?» he said to Monseigneur, as he took his seat at table.

«Yesterday. And you?»

«I come direct.»

«From London?»

«Yes.»

«You have been a long time coming,» said the Marquis, with a smile.

«On the contrary; I come direct.»

«Pardon me! I mean, not a long time on the journey; a long time intending the journey.»

«I have been detained by»—the nephew stopped a moment in his answer—«various business.»

«Without doubt,» said the polished uncle.

So long as a servant was present, no other words passed between them. When coffee had been served and they were alone together, the nephew, looking at the uncle and meeting the eyes of the face that was like a fine mask, opened a conversation.

«I have come back, sir, as you anticipate, pursuing the object that took me away. It carried me into great and unexpected peril; but it is a sacred object, and if it had carried me to death I hope it would have sustained me.»

«Not to death,» said the uncle; «it is not necessary to say, to death.»

«I doubt, sir,» returned the nephew, «whether, if it had carried me to the utmost brink of death, you would have cared to stop me there.»

The deepened marks in the nose, and the lengthening of the fine straight lines in the cruel face, looked ominous as to that; the uncle made a graceful gesture of protest, which was so clearly a slight form of good breeding that it was not reassuring.

«Indeed, sir,» pursued the nephew, «for anything I know, you may have expressly worked to give a more suspicious appearance to the suspicious circumstances that surrounded me.»

«No, no, no,» said the uncle pleasantly.

«But, however that may be,» resumed the nephew, glancing at him with deep distrust, «I know that your diplomacy would stop me by any means, and would know no scruple as to means.»

«My friend, I told you so,» said the uncle, with a fine pulsation in the two marks. «Do me the favor to recall that I told you so, long ago.»

«I recall it.»

«Thank you,» said the Marquis—very sweetly indeed.

His tone lingered in the air, almost like the tone of a musical instrument.

«In effect, sir,» pursued the nephew, «I believe it to be at once your bad fortune, and my good fortune, that has kept me out of a prison in France here.»

«I do not quite understand,» returned the uncle, sipping his coffee. «Dare I ask you to explain?»

«I believe that if you were not in disgrace with the court, and had not been overshadowed by that cloud for years past, a *lettre de cachet* would have sent me to some fortress indefinitely.»

«It is possible,» said the uncle, with great calmness. «For the honor of the family, I could even resolve to incommode you to that extent. Pray excuse me!»

«I perceive that, happily for me, the Reception of the day before yesterday was, as usual, a cold one,» observed the nephew.

«I would not say happily, my friend,» returned the uncle, with refined politeness; «I would not be sure of that. A good opportunity for consideration, surrounded by the advantages of solitude, might influence your destiny to far greater advantage than you influence it for yourself. But it is useless to discuss the question. I am, as you say, at a disadvantage. These little instruments of correction, these gentle aids to the power and honor of families, these slight favors that might so incommode you, are only to be obtained now by interest and importunity. They are sought by so many, and they are granted (comparatively) to so few! It used not to be so, but France in all such things is changed for the worse. Our not remote ancestors held the right of life and death over the surrounding vulgar. From this room, many such dogs have been taken out to be hanged; in the next room (my bedroom), one fellow, to our knowledge, was poniarded on the spot for professing some insolent delicacy respecting his daughter—*his* daughter! We have lost many privileges; a new philosophy has become the mode; and the assertion of our station, in these days, might (I do not go so far as to say would, but might) cause us real inconvenience. All very bad, very bad!»

The Marquis took a gentle little pinch of snuff and shook his head; as elegantly despondent as he could becomingly be, of a country still containing himself, that great means of regeneration.

«We have so asserted our station, both in the old time and in the modern time also,» said the nephew, gloomily, «that I believe our name to be more detested than any name in France.»

«Let us hope so,» said the uncle. «Detestation of the high is the involuntary homage of the low.»

«There is not,» pursued the nephew, in his former tone, «a face I can look at, in all this country round about us, which looks at me with any deference on it but the dark deference of fear and slavery.»

«A compliment,» said the Marquis, «to the grandeur of the family, merited by the manner in which the family has sustained its grandeur. Hah!» And he took another gentle little pinch of snuff, and lightly crossed his legs.

But when his nephew, leaning an elbow on the table, covered his eyes thoughtfully and dejectedly with his hand, the fine mask looked at him sideways with a stronger concentration of keenness, closeness, and dislike than was comportable with its wearer's assumption of indifference.

«Repression is the only lasting philosophy. The dark deference of fear and slavery, my friend,» observed the Marquis, «will keep the dogs obedient to the whip, as long as this roof,» looking up to it, «shuts out the sky.»

That might not be so long as the Marquis supposed. If a picture of the château as it was to be a very few years hence, and of fifty like it as they too were to be a very few years hence, could have been shown to him that night, he might have been at a loss to claim his own from the ghastly, fire-charred, plunder-wrecked ruins. As for the roof he vaunted, he might have found *that* shutting out the sky in a new way—to wit, forever, from the eyes of the bodies into which its lead was fired, out of the barrels of a hundred thousand muskets.

«Meanwhile,» said the Marquis, «I will preserve the honor and repose of the family, if you will not. But you must be fatigued. Shall we terminate our conference for the night?»

«A moment more.»

«An hour if you please.»

«Sir,» said the nephew, «we have done wrong, and are reaping the fruits of wrong.»

«*We* have done wrong?» repeated the Marquis, with an inquiring smile, and delicately pointing, first to his nephew, then to himself.

«Our family; our honorable family, whose honor is of so much account to both of us, in such different ways. Even in my father's time we did a world of wrong, injuring every human creature who came between us and our pleasure, whatever it was. Why need I speak of my father's time, when it is equally yours? Can I separate my father's twin brother, joint inheritor, and next successor, from himself?»

«Death has done that!» said the Marquis.

«And has left me,» answered the nephew, «bound to a system that is frightful to me, responsible for it but powerless in it; seeking to execute the last request of my dear mother's lips, and obey the last look of my dear mother's eyes, which implored me to have mercy and to redress; and tortured by seeking assistance and power in vain.»

«Seeking them from me, my nephew,» said the Marquis, touching him on the breast with his forefinger,—they were now standing by the hearth,—«you will forever seek them in vain, be assured.»

Every fine straight line in the clear whiteness of his face was cruelly, craftily, and closely compressed, while he stood looking quietly at his nephew, with his snuff-box in his hand. Once again he touched him on the breast, as though his finger were the fine point of a small sword, with which in delicate finesse he ran him through the body, and said, «My friend, I will die perpetuating the system under which I have lived.»

When he had said it, he took a culminating pinch of snuff, and put his box in his pocket.

«Better to be a rational creature,» he added then, after ringing a small bell on the table, «and accept your natural destiny. But you are lost, Monsieur Charles, I see.»

«This property and France are lost to me,» said the nephew, sadly; «I renounce them.»

«Are they both yours to renounce? France may be, but is the property? It is scarcely worth mentioning; but is it, yet?»

«I had no intention, in the words I used, to claim it yet. If it passed to me from you to-morrow—»

«Which I have the vanity to hope is not probable.»

«—or twenty years hence—»

«You do me too much honor,» said the Marquis; «still, I prefer that supposition.»

«—I would abandon it, and live otherwise and elsewhere. It is little to relinquish. What is it but a wilderness of misery and ruin!»

«Hah!» said the Marquis, glancing round the luxurious room.

«To the eye it is fair enough here; but seen in its integrity, under the sky and by the daylight, it is a crumbling tower of waste, mismanagement, extortion, debt, mortgage, oppression, hunger, nakedness, and suffering.»

«Hah!» said the Marquis again, in a well-satisfied manner.

«If it ever becomes mine, it shall be put into some hands better qualified to free it slowly (if such a thing is possible) from the weight that drags it down, so that the miserable people who cannot leave it, and who have been long wrung to the last point of endurance, may in another generation suffer less; but it is not for me. There is a curse on it, and on all this land.»

«And you?» said the uncle. «Forgive my curiosity; do you, under your new philosophy, graciously intend to live?»

«I must do, to live, what others of my countrymen, even with nobility at their backs, may have to do some day—work.»

«In England, for example?»

«Yes. The family honor, sir, is safe for me in this country. The family name can suffer from me in no other, for I bear it in no other.»

The ringing of the bell had caused the adjoining bedchamber to be lighted. It now shone brightly through the door of communication. The Marquis looked that way, and listened for the retreating step of his valet.

«England is very attractive to you, seeing how indifferently you have prospered there,» he observed then, turning his calm face to his nephew with a smile.

«I have already said that for my prospering there, I am sensible I may be indebted to you, sir. For the rest, it is my Refuge.»

«They say, those boastful English, that it is the Refuge of many. You know a compatriot who has found a Refuge there? A Doctor?»

«Yes.»

«With a daughter?»

«Yes.»

«Yes,» said the Marquis. «You are fatigued. Good-night!»

As he bent his head in his most courtly manner, there was a secrecy in his smiling face, and he conveyed an air of mystery to those words, which struck the eyes and ears of his nephew forcibly. At the same time, the thin straight lines of the setting of the eyes, and the thin straight lips, and the markings in the nose, curved with a sarcasm that looked handsomely diabolic.

«Yes,» repeated the Marquis. «A Doctor with a daughter. Yes. So commences the new philosophy! You are fatigued. Good-night!»

It would have been of as much avail to interrogate any stone fence outside the château as to interrogate that face of his. The nephew looked at him in vain, in passing on to the door.

«Good-night!» said the uncle. «I look to the pleasure of seeing you again in the morning. Good repose! Light Monsieur my nephew to his chamber, there!—And burn Monsieur my nephew in his bed, if you will,» he added to himself, before he rang his little bell again, and summoned his valet to his own bedroom.

The valet come and gone, Monsieur the Marquis walked to and fro in his loose chamber-robe, to prepare himself gently for sleep, that hot still night. Rustling about the room, his softly-slippered feet making no noise on the floor, he moved like a refined tiger;—looked like some enchanted marquis of the impenitently wicked sort, in story, whose periodical change into tiger form was either just going off or just coming on.

He moved from end to end of his voluptuous bedroom, looking again at the scraps of the day's journey that came unbidden into his mind; the slow toil up the hill at sunset, the setting sun, the descent, the mill, the prison on the crag, the little village in the hollow, the peasants at the fountain, and the mender of roads with his blue cap pointing out the chain under the carriage. That fountain suggested the Paris fountain, the little bundle lying on the step, the women bending over it, and the tall man with his arms up, crying, «Dead!»

«I am cool now,» said Monsieur the Marquis, «and may go to bed.»

So, leaving only one light burning on the large hearth, he let his thin gauze curtains fall around him, and heard the night break its silence with a long sigh as he composed himself to sleep.

The stone faces on the outer walls stared blindly at the black night for three heavy hours; for three heavy hours the horses in the stables rattled at their racks, the dogs barked, and the owl made a noise with very little resemblance in it to the noise conventionally assigned to the owl by men-poets. But it is the obstinate custom of such creatures hardly ever to say what is set down for them.

For three heavy hours the stone faces of the château, lion and human, stared blindly at the night. Dead darkness lay on all the landscape, dead darkness added its own hush to the hushing dust on all the roads. The burial-place had got to the pass that its little heaps of poor grass were undistinguishable from one another; the figure on the Cross might have come down, for anything that could be seen of it. In the village, taxers and taxed were fast asleep. Dreaming perhaps of banquets, as the starved usually do, and of ease and rest, as the driven slave and the yoked ox may, its lean inhabitants slept soundly, and were fed and freed.

The fountain in the village flowed unseen and unheard, and the fountain at the château dropped unseen and unheard — both melting away, like the minutes that were falling from the spring of Time — through three dark hours. Then the gray water of both began to be ghostly in the light, and the eyes of the stone faces of the château were opened.

Lighter and lighter, until at last the sun touched the tops of the still trees, and poured its radiance over the hill. In the glow, the water of the château fountain seemed to turn to blood, and the stone faces crimsoned. The carol of the birds was loud and high, and on the weather-beaten sill of the great window of the bed-chamber of Monsieur the Marquis, one little bird sang its sweetest song with all its might. At this, the nearest stone face seemed to stare amazed, and with open mouth and dropped under-jaw, looked awe-stricken.

Now the sun was full up, and movement began in the village. Casement windows opened, crazy doors were unbarred, and people came forth shivering — chilled, as yet, by the new sweet air. Then began the rarely lightened toil of the day among the village population. Some to the fountain; some to the fields; men and women here to dig and delve; men and women there to see to the poor live stock, and lead the bony cows out to such pasture as could be found by the roadside. In the church and at the Cross a kneeling figure or two; attendant on the latter prayers, the led cow, trying for a breakfast among the weeds at its foot.

The château awoke later, as became its quality, but awoke gradually and surely. First, the lonely boar-spears and knives of the chase had been reddened as of old; then had gleamed trenchant in the morning sunshine; now doors and windows were thrown open, horses in their stables looked round over their shoulders at the light and freshness pouring in at doorways, leaves sparkled and rustled at iron-grated windows, dogs pulled hard at their chains and reared, impatient to be loosed.

All these trivial incidents belonged to the routine of life and the return of morning. Surely not so the ringing of the great bell of the château, nor the running up and down the stairs, nor the hurried figures on the terrace, nor the booting and tramping here and there and everywhere, nor the quick saddling of horses and riding away?

What winds conveyed this hurry to the grizzled mender of roads, already at work on the hill-top beyond the village, with his day's dinner (not much to carry) lying in a bundle that it was worth no crow's while to peck at, on a heap of stones? Had the birds, carrying some grains of it to a distance, dropped one over him as they sow chance seeds? Whether or no, the mender of roads ran, on the sultry morning, as if for his life, down the hill, knee-high in dust, and never stopped till he got to the fountain.

All the people of the village were at the fountain, standing about in their depressed manner, and whispering low, but showing no other emotions than grim curiosity and surprise. The led cows, hastily brought in and tethered to anything that would hold them, were looking stupidly on, or lying down chewing the cud of nothing particularly repaying their trouble, which they had picked up in their interrupted saunter. Some of the people of the château, and some of those of the posting-house, and all the taxing authorities, were armed more or less, and were crowded on the other side of the little street in a purposeless way that was highly fraught with nothing. Already the mender of roads had penetrated into the midst of a group of fifty particular friends, and was smiting himself in the breast with his blue cap. What did all this portend, and what portended the swift hoisting-up of Monsieur Gabelle behind a servant on horseback, and the conveying away of the said Gabelle (double-laden though the horse was), at a gallop, like a new version of the German ballad of Leonora?

It portended that there was one stone face too many, up at the château.

The Gorgon had surveyed the building again in the night, and had added the one stone face wanting; the stone face for which it had waited through about two hundred years.

It lay back on the pillow of Monsieur the Marquis. It was like a fine mask, suddenly started, made angry, and petrified.

Driven home into the heart of the stone figure attached to it, was a knife. Round its hilt was a frill of paper, on which was scrawled:—

"*Drive him fast to his tomb. This, from* JACQUES."

THE IVY GREEN

OH, A dainty plant is the Ivy Green,
That creepeth o'er ruins old!
Of right choice food are his meals, I ween,
In his cell so lone and cold.
The wall must be crumbled, the stone decayed,
To pleasure his dainty whim:
And the moldering dust that years have made
Is a merry meal for him.
Creeping where no life is seen,
A rare old plant is the Ivy Green.

Fast he stealeth on, though he wears no wings,
And a stanch old heart has he.
How closely he twineth, how tight he clings,
To his friend the huge Oak-Tree!
And slyly he traileth along the ground,
And his leaves he gently waves,
As he joyously hugs and crawleth round
The rich mold of dead men's graves.
Creeping where grim death has been,
A rare old plant is the Ivy Green.

Whole ages have fled and their works decayed,
And nations have scattered been;
But the stout old Ivy shall never fade,
From its hale and hearty green.
The brave old plant in its lonely days
Shall fatten upon the past:
For the stateliest building man can raise
Is the Ivy's food at last.
Creeping on, where time has been,
A rare old plant is the Ivy Green.

DENIS DIDEROT

(1713–1784)

Among the French Encyclopædists of the eighteenth century Denis Diderot holds the place of leader. There were intellects of broader scope and of much surer balance in that famous group, but none of such versatility, brilliancy, and outbursting force. To his associates he was a marvel and an inspiration.

Denis Diderot

He was born in October 1713, in Langres, Haute-Marne, France; and died in Paris July 31st, 1784. After a classical education in Jesuit schools, he utterly disgusted his father by turning to the Bohemian life of a littérateur in Paris. Although very poor, he married at the age of thirty. The whole story of his married life — the common Parisian story in those days — reflects no credit on him; though his *liaison* with Mademoiselle Voland presents the aspects of a friendship abiding through life. Poverty spurred him to exertion. Four days of work in 1746 are said to have produced ‘Pensées Philosophiques’ (Philosophic Thoughts). This book, with a little essay following it, ‘Interprétation de la Nature,’ was his first open attack on revealed religion. Its argument, though only negative, and keeping within the bounds of theism, foretokened a class of utterances which were frequent in Diderot's later years, and whose assurance of his materialistic atheism would be complete had they not been too exclamatory for settled conviction. He contents himself with glorifying the passions, to the annulling of all ethical standards. On this point at least his convictions were stable, for long afterward he writes thus to Mademoiselle Voland:—“The man of mediocre passion lives and dies like the brute. . . . If we were bound to choose between Racine, a bad husband, a bad father, a false friend, and a sublime poet, and Racine, good father, good husband, good friend, and dull worthy man, I hold to the first. Of Racine the bad man, what remains? Nothing. Of Racine the man of genius? The work is eternal.”

About 1747 he produced an allegory, ‘Promenade du Sceptique.’ This French ‘Pilgrim's Progress’ scoffs at the Church of Rome for denying pleasure, then decries the pleasures of the world, and ends by asserting the hopeless uncertainty of the philosophy which both scoffs at the Church and decries worldly pleasure. At this period he was evidently inclined to an irregular attack on the only forms of Christianity familiar to him, asceticism and pietism.

In 1749 Diderot first showed himself a thinker of original power, in his Letter on the Blind. This work, ‘Lettre sur les Aveugles à l'Usage de Ceux qui Voient’ (Letter on the Blind for the Use of Those who See) opened the eyes of the public to Diderot's peculiar genius, and the eyes of the authorities to the menace in his principles. The result was his imprisonment, and from that the spread of his views. His offense was, that through his ingenious supposition of the mind deprived of its use of one or more of the bodily senses, he had shown the relativity of all man's conceptions, and had thence deduced the relativity, the lack of absoluteness, of all man's ethical standards—thus invalidating the foundations of civil and social order. The broad assertion that Diderot and his philosophic group caused the French Revolution has only this basis, that these men were among the omens of its advance, feeling its stir afar but not recognizing the coming earthquake. Yet it may be conceded that Diderot anticipated things great and strange; for his mind, although neither precise nor capable of sustained and systematic thought, was amazingly original in conception and powerful in grasp. The mist, blank to his brethren, seems to have wreathed itself into wonderful shapes to his eye; he was the seer whose wild enthusiasm caught the oracles from an inner shrine. A predictive power appears in his Letter on the Blind, where he imagines the blind taught to read by touch; and nineteenth-century hypotheses gleam dimly in his random guess at variability in organisms, and at survival of those best adapted to their environment.

Diderot's monumental work, ‘L'Encyclopédie,’ dates from the middle of the century. It was his own vast enlargement of Ephraim Chambers's Cyclopædia of 1727, of which a bookseller had demanded a revision in French. D'Alembert was secured as his colleague, and in 1751 the first volume appeared. The list of contributors includes most of the great contemporary names in French literature. From these, Diderot and D'Alembert gathered the inner group known as the French Encyclopædists, to whose writings has been ascribed a general tendency to destroy religion and to reconstitute society. The authorities interfered repeatedly, with threats and prohibitions of the publication; but the science of government included the science of connivance for an adequate consideration, and the great work went forward. Its danger lurked in its principles; for Diderot dealt but little in the cheap flattery which the modern demagogue addresses to the populace. D'Alembert, wearied by ten years of persecution, retired in 1759, leaving the indefatigable Diderot to struggle alone through seven years, composing and revising hundreds of articles, correcting proofs, supervising the unrivaled illustrations of the mechanic arts, while quieting the opposition of the authorities.

The Encyclopædia under Diderot followed no one philosophic path. Indeed, there are no signs that he ever gave any consideration to either the intellectual or the ethical force of consistency. His writing indicates his utter carelessness both as to the direction and as to the pace of his thought. He had an abiding conviction that Christianity was partly delusion and largely priestcraft, and was maintained chiefly for upholding iniquitous privilege. His antagonism was developed primarily from his emotions and sympathies rather than from his intellect; hence it sometimes swerved, drawing perilously near to formal orthodoxy. Moreover, this vivacious philosopher sometimes rambled into practical advice, and easily effervesced into fervid moralizings of the sentimental and almost tearful sort. His immense natural capacity for sentiment appears in his own account of his meeting with Grimm after a few months' absence. His sentimentalism, however, had its remarkable counterpoise in a most practical tendency of mind. In the Encyclopædia the interests of agriculture and of all branches of manufacture were treated with great fullness; and the reform of feudal abuses lingering in the laws of France was vigorously urged in a style more practical than cyclopædic.

Diderot gave much attention to the drama, and his ‹Paradoxe sur le Comédien› (Paradox on the Actor) is a valuable discussion. He is the father of the modern domestic drama. His influence upon the dramatic literature of Germany was direct and immediate; it appeared in the plays of Lessing and Schiller, and much of Lessing's criticism was inspired by Diderot. His ‹Père de Famille› (Family-Father) and ‹Le Fils Naturel› (The Natural Son) marked the beginning of a new era in the history of the stage, in the midst of which we are now living. Breaking with the old traditions, Diderot abandoned the lofty themes of classic tragedy and portrayed the life of the *bourgeoisie*. The influence of England, frequently manifest in the work of the Encyclopædists, is evident also here. Richardson was then the chief force in fiction, and the sentimental element so characteristic in him reappears in the dramas of Diderot.

Goethe was strongly attracted by the genius of Diderot, and thought it worth his while not only to translate but to supply with a long and luminous commentary the latter's ‹Essay on Painting.› It was by a singular trick of fortune, too, that one of Diderot's most powerful works should first have appeared in German garb, and not in the original French until after the author's death. A manuscript copy of the book chanced to fall into the hands of Goethe, who so greatly admired it that he at once translated, annotated, and published it. This was the famous dialogue 'Le Neveu de Rameau' (Rameau's Nephew), a work which only Diderot's peculiar genius could have produced. Depicting the typical parasite, shameless, quick-witted for every species of villainy, at home in every possible meanness, the dialogue is a probably unequaled compound of satire, high æsthetics, gleaming humor, sentimental moralizing, fine musical criticism, and scientific character analysis, with passages of brutal indecency.

Among literary critics of painting, Diderot has his place in the highest rank. His nine 'Salons'—criticisms which in his good-nature he wrote for the use of his friend Grimm, on the annual exhibitions in the Paris Salon from 1759 onward—have never been surpassed among non-technical criticisms for brilliancy, freshness, and philosophic suggestiveness. They reveal the man's elemental strength; which was not in his knowledge, for he was without technical training in art and had seen scarcely any of the world's masterpieces, but in his sensuously sympathetic nature, which gave him quickness of insight and delicacy in interpretation.

He had the faculty of making and keeping friends, being unaffected, genial, amiable, enthusiastically generous and helpful to his friends, and without vindictiveness to his foes. He needed these qualities to counteract his almost utter lack of conscientiousness, his gush of sentiment, his unregulated morals, his undisciplined genius, his unbalanced thought. His style of writing, often vivid and strong, is as often awkward and dull, and is frequently lacking in finish. As a philosophic author and thinker his voluminous work is of little enduring worth, for though plentiful in original power it totally lacks organic unity; his thought rambles carelessly, his method is confused. It has been said of him that he was a master who produced no masterpiece. But as a talker, a converser, all witnesses testify that he was wondrously inspiring and suggestive, speaking sometimes as from mysterious heights of vision or out of unsearchable deeps of thought.

FROM ‹RAMEAU'S NEPHEW›

BE THE weather fair or foul, it is my custom in any case at five o'clock in the afternoon to stroll in the Palais Royal. I am always to be seen alone and meditative, on the bench D'Argenson. I hold converse with myself on politics or love, on taste or philosophy, and yield up my soul entirely to its own frivolity. It may follow the first idea that presents itself, be the idea wise or foolish. In the Allée de Foi one sees our young rakes following upon the heels of some courtesan who passes on with shameless mien, laughing face, animated glance, and a pug nose; but they soon leave her to follow another, teasing them all, joining none of them. My thoughts are my courtesans.

When it is really too cold or rainy, I take refuge in the Café de la Régence and amuse myself by watching the chess-players. Paris is the place of the world and the Café de la Régence the place of Paris where the best chess is played. There one witnesses the most carefully calculated moves; there one hears the most vulgar conversation; for since it is possible to be at once a man of intellect and a great chess-player, like Légal, so also one may be at once a great chess-player and a very silly person, like Foubert or Mayot.

One afternoon I was there, observing much, speaking rarely, and hearing as little as possible, when one of the most singular personages came up to me that ever was produced by this land of ours, where surely God has never caused a dearth of singular characters. He is a combination of high-mindedness and baseness, of sound understanding and folly; in his head the conceptions of honor and dishonor must be strangely tangled, for the good qualities with which nature has endowed him he displays without boastfulness, and the bad qualities without shame. For the rest, he is firmly built, has an extraordinary power of imagination, and possesses an uncommonly strong pair of lungs. Should you ever meet him and succeed in escaping from the charm of his originality, it must be by stopping both ears with your fingers or by precipitate flight. Heavens, what terrible lungs!

And nothing is less like him than he himself. Sometimes he is thin and wasted, like a man in the last stages of consumption; you could count his teeth through his cheeks; you would think he had not tasted food for several days, or had come from La Trappe.

A month later he is fattened and filled out as if he had never left the banquets of the rich or had been fed among the Bernardines. To-day, with soiled linen, torn trousers, clad in rags, and almost barefoot, he passes with bowed head, avoids those whom he meets, till one is tempted to call him and bestow upon him an alms. To-morrow, powdered, well groomed, well dressed, and well shod, he carries his head high, lets himself be seen, and you would take him almost for a respectable man.

So he lives from day to day, sad or merry, according to the circumstances. His first care, when he rises in the morning, is to take thought where he is to dine. After dinner he bethinks himself of some opportunity to procure supper, and with the night come new cares. Sometimes he goes on foot to his little attic, which is his home if the landlady, impatient at long arrears of rent, has not taken the key away from him. Sometimes he goes to one of the taverns in the suburbs, and there, between a bit of bread and a mug of beer, awaits the day. If he lacks the six sous necessary to procure him quarters for the night, which is occasionally the case, he applies to some cabman among his friends or to the coachman of some great lord, and a place on the straw beside the horses is vouchsafed him. In the morning he carries a part of his mattress in his hair. If the season is mild, he spends the whole night strolling back and forth on the Cours or in the Champs Élysées. With the day he appears again in the city, dressed yesterday for to-day and to-day often for the rest of the week.

For such originals I cannot feel much esteem, but there are others who make close acquaintances and even friends of them. Once in the year perhaps they are able to put their spell upon me, when I meet them, because their character is in such strong contrast to that of every-day humanity, and they break the oppressive monotony which our education, our social conventions, our traditional proprieties have produced. When such a man enters a company, he acts like a cake of yeast that raises the whole, and restores to each a part of his natural individuality. He shakes them up, brings things into motion, elicits praise or censure, drives truth into the open, makes upright men recognizable, unmasks the rogues, and there the wise man sits and listens and is enabled to distinguish one class from another.

This particular specimen I had long known; he frequented a house into which his talents had secured him the entrée. These people had an only daughter. He swore to the parents that he would marry their daughter. They only shrugged their shoulders, laughed in his face, and assured him that he was a fool. But I saw the day come when the thing was accomplished. He asked me for some money, which I gave him. He had, I know not how, squirmed his way into a few houses, where a *couvert* stood always ready for him, but it had been stipulated that he should never speak without the consent of his hosts. So there he sat and ate, filled the while with malice; it was fun to see him under this restraint. The moment he ventured to break the treaty and open his mouth, at the very first word the guests all shouted «O Rameau!» Then his eyes flashed wrathfully, and he fell upon his food again with renewed energy.

You were curious to know the man's name; there it is. He is the nephew of the famous composer who has saved us from the church music of Lulli which we have been chanting for a hundred years, . . . and who, having buried the Florentine, will himself be buried by Italian virtuosi; he dimly feels this, and so has become morose and irritable, for no one can be in a worse humor — not even a beautiful woman who in the morning finds a pimple on her nose — than an author who sees himself threatened with the fate of outliving his reputation, as Marivaux and Crébillon *fils* prove.

Rameau's nephew came up to me. «Ah, my philosopher, do I meet you once again? What are you doing here among the good-for-nothings? Are you wasting your time pushing bits of wood about?»

I — No; but when I have nothing better to do, I take a passing pleasure in watching those who push them about with skill.

He — A rare pleasure, surely. Excepting Légal and Philidor, there is no one here that understands it. . . .

I — You are hard to please. I see that only the best finds favor with you.

He — Yes, in chess, checkers, poetry, oratory, music, and such other trumpery. Of what possible use is mediocrity in these things?

I — I am almost ready to agree with you. . . .

He—You have always shown some interest in me, because I'm a poor devil whom you really despise, but who after all amuses you.

I—That is true.

He—Then let me tell you. (Before beginning, he drew a deep sigh, covered his forehead with both hands, then with calm countenance continued:—) You know I am ignorant, foolish, silly, shameless, rascally, gluttonous.

I—What a panegyric!

He—It is entirely true. Not a word to be abated; no contradiction, I pray you. No one knows me better than I know myself, and I don't tell all.

I—Rather than anger you, I will assent.

He—Now, just think, I lived with people who valued me precisely because all these qualities were mine in a high degree.

I—That is most remarkable. I have hitherto believed that people concealed these qualities even from themselves, or excused them, but always despised them in others.

He—Conceal them? Is that possible? You may be sure that when Palissot is alone and contemplates himself, he tells quite a different story. You may be sure that he and his companion make open confession to each other that they are a pair of arrant rogues. Despise these qualities in others? My people were much more reasonable, and I fared excellently well among them. I was cock of the walk. When absent, I was instantly missed. I was pampered. I was their little Rameau, their good Rameau, the shameless, ignorant, lazy Rameau, the fool, the clown, the gourmand. Each of these epithets was to me a smile, a caress, a slap on the back, a box on the ears, a kick, a dainty morsel thrown upon my plate at dinner, a liberty permitted me after dinner as if it were of no account; for I am of no account. People make of me and do before me and with me whatever they please, and I never give it a thought. . . .

I—You have been giving lessons, I understand, in accompaniment and composition?

He—Yes.

I—And you knew absolutely nothing about it?

He—No, by Heaven; and for that very reason I was a much better teacher than those who imagine they know something about it. At all events, I didn't spoil the taste nor ruin the hands of my young pupils. If when they left me they went to a competent master, they had nothing to unlearn, for they had learned nothing, and that was just so much time and money saved.

I—But how did you do it?

He—The way they all do it. I came, threw myself into a chair:—« How bad the weather is! How tired the pavement makes one!» Then some scraps of town gossip: . . . « At the last Amateur Concert there was an Italian woman who sang like an angel. . . . Poor Dumênil doesn't know what to say or do,» etc., etc. . . . « Come, mademoiselle, where is your music-book?» And as mademoiselle displays no great haste, searches every nook and corner for the book, which she has mislaid, and finally calls the maid to help her, I continue:—« Little Clairon is an enigma. There is talk of a perfectly absurd marriage of—what is her name?»—« Nonsense, Rameau, it isn't possible.»—« They say the affair is all settled.» . . . « There is a rumor that Voltaire is dead.»—« All the better.»—« Why all the better?»—« Then he is sure to treat us to some droll skit. That's a way he has, a fortnight before his death.» What more should I say? I told a few scandals about the families in the houses where I am received, for we are all great scandalmongers. In short, I played the fool; they listened and laughed, and exclaimed, « He is really too droll, isn't he?» Meanwhile the music-book had been found under a chair, where a little dog or a little cat had worried it, chewed it, and torn it. Then the pretty child sat down at the piano and began to make a frightful noise upon it. I went up to her, secretly making a sign of approbation to her mother. « Well, now, that isn't so bad,» said the mother; « one needs only to make up one's mind to a thing; but the trouble is, one will not make up one's mind; one would rather kill time by chattering, trifling, running about, and God knows what. Scarcely do you turn your back but the book is closed, and not until you are at her side again is it opened. Besides, I have never heard you reprimand her.» In the mean time, since something had to be done, I took her hands and placed them differently. I pretended to lose my patience; I shouted,—« Sol, sol, sol, mademoiselle, it's a *sol.*» The mother: « Mademoiselle, have you no ears? I'm not at the piano, I'm not looking at your notes, but my own feeling tells me that it ought to be a *sol.* You give the gentleman infinite trouble. You remember nothing, and make no progress.» To break the force of this reproof a little, I tossed my head and said: « Pardon me, madame, pardon me. It would be better if mademoiselle would only practice a little, but after all it is not so bad.»—« In your place I would keep her a whole year at one piece.»—« Rest assured, I shall not let her off until she has mastered every difficulty; and that will not take so long, perhaps, as mademoiselle thinks.» — « Monsieur Rameau, you flatter her; you are too good.» And that is the only thing they would remember of the whole lesson, and would upon occasion repeat to me. So the lesson came to an end. My pupil handed me the fee, with a graceful gesture and a courtesy which her dancing-master had taught her. I put the money into my pocket, and the mother said, « That's very nice, mademoiselle. If Favillier were here, he would praise you.» For appearance's sake I chattered for a minute or two more; then I vanished; and that is what they called in those days a lesson in accompaniment.

I—And is the case different now?

He—Heavens! I should think so. I come in, I am serious, throw my muff aside, open the piano, try the keys, show signs of great impatience, and if I am kept a moment waiting I shout as if my purse had been stolen. In an hour I must be there or there; in two hours with the Duchess So-and-so; at noon I must go to the fair Marquise; and then there is to be a concert at Baron de Bagge's, Rue Neuve des Petits Champs.

I—And meanwhile no one expects you at all.

He—Certainly not. . . . And precisely because I can further my fortune through vices which come natural to me, which I acquired without labor and practice without effort, which are in harmony with the customs of my countrymen, which are quite to the taste of my patrons, and better adapted to their special needs than inconvenient virtues would be, which from morning to night would be standing accusations against them, it would be strange indeed if I should torture myself like one of the damned to twist and turn and make of myself something which I am not, and hide myself beneath a character foreign to me, and assume the most estimable qualities, whose worth I will not dispute, but which I could acquire and live up to only by great exertions, and which after all would lead to nothing,—perhaps to worse than nothing. Moreover, ought a beggar like me, who lives upon the wealthy, constantly to hold up to his patrons a mirror of good conduct? People praise virtue but hate it; they fly from it, let it freeze; and in this world a man has to keep his feet warm. Besides, I should always be in the sourest humor: for why is it that the pious and the devotional are so hard, so repellent, so unsociable? It is because they have imposed upon themselves a task contrary to their nature. They suffer, and when a man suffers he makes others suffer. Now, that is no affair of mine or of my patrons'. I must be in good spirits, easy, affable, full of sallies, drollery, and folly. Virtue demands reverence, and reverence is inconvenient; virtue challenges admiration, and admiration is not entertaining. I have to do with people whose time hangs heavy on their hands; they want to laugh. Now consider the folly: the ludicrous makes people laugh, and I therefore must be a fool; I must be amusing, and if nature had not made me so, then by hook or by crook I should have made myself seem so. Fortunately I have no need to play the hypocrite. There are hypocrites enough of all colors without me, and not counting those who deceive themselves. . . . Should it ever occur to friend Rameau to play Cato, to despise fortune, women, good living, idleness, what would he be? A hypocrite. Let Rameau remain what he is, a happy robber among wealthy robbers, and a man without either real or boasted virtue. In short, your idea of happiness, the happiness of a few enthusiastic dreamers like you, has no charm for me. . . .

I—He earns his bread dearly, who in order to live must assail virtue and knowledge.

He—I have already told you that we are of no consequence. We slander all men and grieve none.

[The dialogue reverts to music.]

I—Every imitation has its original in nature. What is the musician's model when he breaks into song?

He—Why do you not grasp the subject higher up? What is song?

I—That, I confess, is a question beyond my powers. That's the way with us all. The memory is stored with words only, which we think we understand because we often use them and even apply them correctly, but in the mind we have only indefinite conceptions. When I use the word «song,» I have no more definite idea of it than you and the majority of your kind have when you say reputation, disgrace, honor, vice, virtue, shame, propriety, mortification, ridicule.

He—Song is an imitation in tones, produced either by the voice or by instruments, of a scale invented by art, or if you will, established by nature; an imitation of physical sounds or passionate utterances; and you see, with proper alterations this definition could be made to fit painting, oratory, sculpture, and poetry. Now to come to your question, What is the model of the musician or of song? It is the declamation, when the model is alive or sensate; it is the tone, when the model is insensate. The declamation must be regarded as a line, and the music as another line which twines about it. The stronger and the more genuine is this declamation, this model of song, the more numerous the points at which the accompanying music intersects it, the more beautiful will it be. And this our younger composers have clearly perceived. When one hears «Je suis un pauvre diable,» one feels that it is a miser's complaint. If he didn't sing, he would address the earth in the very same tones when he intrusts to its keeping his gold: «O terre, reçois mon trésor.» . . . In such works with the greatest variety of characters, there is a convincing truth of declamation that is unsurpassed. I tell you, go, go, and hear the aria where the young man who feels that he is dying, cries out, «Mon cœur s'en va.» Listen to the air, listen to the accompaniment, and then tell me what difference there is between the true tones of a dying man and the handling of this music. You will see that the line of the melody exactly coincides with the line of declamation. I say nothing of the time, which is one of the conditions of song; I confine myself to the expression, and there is nothing truer than the statement which I have somewhere read, «Musices seminarium accentus,»—the accent is the seed-plot of the melody. And for that reason, consider how difficult and important a matter it is to be able to write a good recitative. There is no beautiful aria out of which a beautiful recitative could not be made; no beautiful recitative out of which a clever man could not produce a beautiful aria. I will not assert that one who recites well will also be able to sing well, but I should be much surprised if a good singer could not recite well. And you may believe all that I tell you now, for it is true.

(And then he walked up and down and began to hum a few arias from the 'Île des Fous,' etc., exclaiming from time to time, with upturned eyes and hands upraised:—) «Isn't that beautiful, great heavens! isn't that beautiful? Is it possible to have a pair of ears on one's head and question its beauty?» Then as his enthusiasm rose he sang quite softly, then more loudly as he became more impassioned, then with gestures, grimaces, contortions of body. «Well,» said I, «he is losing his mind, and I may expect a new scene.» And in fact, all at once he burst out singing. . . . He passed from one aria to another, fully thirty of them,—Italian, French, tragic, comic, of every sort. Now with a deep bass he descended into hell; then, contracting his throat, he split the upper air with a falsetto, and in gait, mien, and action he imitated the different singers, by turns raving, commanding, mollified, scoffing. There was a little girl that wept, and he hit off all her pretty little ways. Then he was a priest, a king, a tyrant; he threatened, commanded, stormed; then he was a slave and submissive. He despaired, he grew tender, he lamented, he laughed, always in the tone, the time, the sense of the words, of the character, of the situation.

All the chess-players had left their boards and were gathered around him; the windows of the café were crowded with passers-by, attracted by the noise. There was laughter enough to bring down the ceiling. He noticed nothing, but went on in such a rapt state of mind, in an enthusiasm so close to madness, that I was uncertain whether he would recover, or if he would be thrown into a cab and taken straight to the mad-house; the while he sang the Lamentations of Jomelli.

With precision, fidelity, and incredible warmth, he rendered one of the finest passages, the superb obligato recitative in which the prophet paints the destruction of Jerusalem; he wept himself, and the eyes of the listeners were moist. More could not be desired in delicacy of vocalization, nor in the expression of overwhelming grief. He dwelt especially on those parts in which the great composer has shown his greatness most clearly. When he was not singing, he took the part of the instruments; these he quickly dropped again, to return to the vocal part, weaving one into the other so perfectly that the connection, the unity of the whole, was preserved. He took possession of our souls and held them in the strangest suspense I have ever experienced. Did I admire him? Yes, I admired him. Was I moved and melted? I was moved and melted, and yet something of the ludicrous mingled itself with these feelings and modified their nature.

But you would have burst out laughing at the way he imitated the different instruments. With a rough muffled tone and puffed-out cheeks he represented horns and bassoon; for the oboe he assumed a rasping nasal tone; with incredible rapidity he made his voice run over the string instruments, whose tones he endeavored to reproduce with the greatest accuracy; the flute passages he whistled; he rumbled out the sounds of the German flute; he shouted and sang with the gestures of a madman, and so alone and unaided he impersonated the entire ballet corps, the singers, the whole orchestra,—in short, a complete performance,—dividing himself into twenty different characters, running, stopping, with the mien of one entranced, with glittering eyes and foaming mouth. . . . He was quite beside himself. Exhausted by his exertions, like a man awakening from a deep sleep or emerging from a long period of abstraction, he remained motionless, stupefied, astonished. He looked about him in bewilderment, like one trying to recognize the place in which he finds himself. He awaited the return of his strength, of his consciousness; he dried his face mechanically. Like one who upon awaking finds his bed surrounded by groups of people, in complete oblivion and profound unconsciousness of what he had been doing, he cried, «Well, gentlemen, what's the matter? What are you laughing at? What are you wondering about? What's the matter?»

I—My dear Rameau, let us talk again of music. Tell me how it comes that with the facility you display for appreciating the finest passages of the great masters, for retaining them in your memory, and for rendering them to the delight of others with all the enthusiasm with which the music inspires you,—how comes it that you have produced nothing of value yourself?

(Instead of answering me, he tossed his head, and raising his finger towards heaven, cried:—)

The stars, the stars! When nature made Leo, Vinci, Pergolese, Duni, she wore a smile; her face was solemn and commanding when she created my dear uncle Rameau, who for ten years has been called the great Rameau, and who will soon be named no more. But when she scraped his nephew together, she made a face and a face and a face.—(And as he spoke he made grimaces, one of contempt, one of irony, one of scorn. He went through the motions of kneading dough, and smiled at the ludicrous forms he gave it. Then he threw the strange pagoda from him.) So she made me and threw me down among other pagodas, some with portly well-filled paunches, short necks, protruding goggle eyes, and an apoplectic appearance; others with lank and crooked necks and emaciated forms, with animated eyes and hawks' noses. These all felt like laughing themselves to death when they saw me, and when I saw them I set my arms akimbo and felt like laughing myself to death, for fools and clowns take pleasure in one another; seek one another out, attract one another. Had I not found upon my arrival in this world the proverb ready-made, that the money of fools is the inheritance of the clever, the world would have owed it to me. I felt that nature had put my inheritance into the purse of the pagodas, and I tried in a thousand ways to recover it.

I—I know these ways. You have told me of them. I have admired them. But with so many capabilities, why do you not try to accomplish something great?

He—That is exactly what a man of the world said to the Abbé Le Blanc. The abbé replied:—«The Marquise de Pompadour takes me in hand and brings me to the door of the Academy; then she withdraws her hand; I fall and break both legs.»—«You ought to pull yourself together,» rejoined the man of the world, «and break the door in with your head.»—«I have just tried that,» answered the abbé, «and do you know what I got for it? A bump on the head.» . . . (Then he drank a swallow from what remained in the bottle and turned to his neighbor.) Sir, I beg you for a pinch of snuff. That's a fine snuff-box you have there. You are a musician? No! All the better for you. They are a lot of poor deplorable wretches. Fate made me one of them, me! Meanwhile at Montmartre there is a mill, and in the mill there is perhaps a miller or a miller's lad, who will never hear anything but the roaring of the mill, and who might have composed the most beautiful of songs. Rameau, get you to the mill, to the mill; it's there you belong. . . . But it is half-past five. I hear the vesper bell which summons me too. Farewell. It's true, is it not, philosopher, I am always the same Rameau?

I—Yes, indeed. Unfortunately.

He—Let me enjoy my misfortune forty years longer. He laughs best who laughs last.

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FRANZ VON DINGELSTEDT

(1814–1881)

FRANZ VON DINGELSTEDT was born at Halsdorf, Hessen, Germany, June 30th, 1814. He attained eminence as a poet and dramatist, but his best powers were devoted to his principal calling as theatre director.

DINGELSTEDT

His boyhood's education was received at Rinteln. At the University of Marburg he applied himself to theology and philology, but more especially to modern languages and literature. After leaving the university he became instructor at Ricklingen, near Hanover. He was characterized, even as a young man, by his political freedom and independence of thought; and at Cassel, where in 1836 he was teacher in the Lyceum, he was on this account looked upon so much askance that it was found expedient to transfer him to the gymnasium at Fulda (1838). He resigned this position, however, in order to devote himself to writing. A collection of his poems appeared in 1838–45, and of these, 'Lieder eines Kosmopolitischen Nachtwächters' (Songs of a Cosmopolitan Night-Watchman: 1841) may be said to have produced a genuine agitation. These were not only important as literature, but as political promulgations, boldly embodying the radical sentiments of freethinking Germany.

In 1841 he went to Augsburg, connected himself with the Allgemeine Zeitung, and traveled as newspaper correspondent in France, Holland, Belgium, and England. 'Das Wanderbuch' (The Wander-Book), and 'Jusqu' à la Mer — Erinnerungen aus Holland' (As Far as the Sea — Remembrances of Holland: 1847), were the fruits of these journeys. He had in contemplation a voyage to the Orient, and preparatory to this he settled for a short time in Vienna; but the journey was not undertaken, for just at this time he was appointed librarian of the Royal Library of Stuttgart, and reader to the king, with the title of Court Councilor. Here in 1844 he married the celebrated singer Jenny Lutzer. He returned to Vienna, where in 1850 his drama 'Das Haus der Barneveldt' (The House of the Barneveldts) was produced with such brilliant success that he was thereupon appointed stage manager of the National Theatre at Munich. To this for six years he devoted his best efforts, presenting in the most admirable manner the finest of the German classics. The merit of his work was recognized by the king, who ennobled him in 1857. He was pre-eminently a theatrical manager, and served successively at Weimar (1857) and at Vienna, where he was appointed director of the Court Opera House in 1867, and of the Burg Theatre in 1870. He brought the classic plays of other lands upon the stage, and his revivals of Shakespeare's historical plays and the 'Winter's Tale,' and of Molière's 'L'Avare' (The Miser), were brilliant events in the theatrical annals of Vienna. He was made Imperial Councilor by the Emperor, and raised in 1876 to the rank of baron. In 1875 he took the position of general director of both court theatres of Vienna. He died at Vienna, May 15th, 1881.

The novels 'Licht und Schatten der Liebe' (The Light and Shadow of Love: 1838); 'Heptameron,' 1841; and 'Novellenbuch,' 1855, were not wholly successful; but in contrast to these, 'Unter der Erde' (Under the Earth: 1840); 'Sieben Friedliche Erzählungen' (Seven Peaceful Tales: 1844), and 'Die Amazone' (The Amazon: 1868), are admirable.

Regarded purely as literature, Dingelstedt's best productions are his early poems, although his commentaries upon Shakespeare and Goethe are wholly praiseworthy. He was successful chiefly as a political poet, but his muse sings also the joys of domestic life. 'Hauslieder' (Household Songs: 1844), and his poems upon Chamisso and Uhland, are among the most beautiful personal poems in German literature.

A MAN OF BUSINESS

From 'The Amazon': copyrighted by G. P. Putnam's Sons

HERR KRAFFT was about to reply, but was prevented by the hasty appearance of Herr Heyboldt, the first procurist, who entered the apartment; not an antiquated comedy figure in shoe-buckles, coarse woolen socks, velvet pantaloons, and a long-tailed coat, his vest full of tobacco, and a goose-quill back of his comically flexible ear; no, but a fine-looking man, dressed in the latest style and in black, with a medal in his button-hole, and having an earnest, expressive countenance. He was householder, member of the City Council, and militia captain; the gold medal and colored ribbon on his left breast told of his having saved, at the risk of his own life, a Leander who had been carried away by the current in the swimming-baths.

His announcement, urgent as it was, was made without haste, deliberate and cool, somewhat as the mate informs the captain that an ugly wind has sprung up. « Herr Principal,» he said, « the crowd has broken in the barriers and one wing of the gateway; they are attacking the counting-house.» « Who breaks, pays,» said Krafft, with a joke; « we will charge the sport to their account.» — « The police are not strong enough; they have sent to the Royal Watch for military.» — « That is right, Heyboldt. No accident, no arms or legs broken?» — « Not that I know of.» — « Pity for Meyer Hirsch; he would have thundered magnificently in the official Morning News against the excesses of the rage for speculation. Nor any one wounded by the police?» — « Not any, so far.» — « Pity for Hirsch Meyer. The oppositional Evening Journal has missed a capital opportunity of weeping over the barbarity of the soldateska. At all events, the two papers must continue to write — one for, the other against us. Keep Hirsch Meyer and Meyer Hirsch going.» — « All right, Herr Principal.» — « Send each of them a polite line, to the effect that we have taken the liberty of keeping a few shares for him, to sell them at the most favorable moment, and pay him over the difference.» — « It shall be attended to, Herr Principal.» — « So our Southwestern Railway goes well, Heyboldt?» — « By steam, Herr Principal.» The sober man smiled at his daring joke, and Herr Krafft smiled affably with him. « The amount that we have left to furnish will be exhausted before one has time to turn around. The people throw money, bank-notes, government bonds, at our cashiers, who cannot fill up the receipts fast enough. On the Bourse they fought for the blanks.» — « For the next four weeks we will run the stock up, Heyboldt; after that it can fall, but slowly, with decorum.» — « I understand, Herr Principal.»

A cashier came rushing in without knocking. « Herr Principal,» he stammered in his panic, « we have not another blank, and the people are pouring in upon us more and more violently. Wild shouts call for you.» « To your place, sir,» thundered Krafft at him. « I shall come when I think it time. In no case,» he added more quietly, « before the military arrive. We need an interference, for the sake of the market.» The messenger disappeared; but pale, bewildered countenances were to be seen in the doorways of the comptoir; the house called for its master: the trembling daughter sent again and again for her father.

«Let us bring the play to a close,» said Herr Krafft, after brief deliberation; he stepped into the middle office, flung open a window, and raising his harsh voice to its loudest tones, cried to the throng below, «You are looking for me, folks. Here I am. What do you want of me?» «Shares, subscriptions,» was the noisy answer. — «You claim without any right or any manners. This is my house, a peaceable citizen's house. You are breaking in as though it were a dungeon, an arsenal, a tax-office,—as though we were in the midst of a revolution. Are you not ashamed of yourselves?» A confused murmur rang through the astonished ranks. «If you wish to do business with me,» continued the merchant, «you must first learn manners and discipline. Have I invited your visit? Do I need your money, or do you need my shares? Send up some deputies to convey your requests. I shall have nothing to do with a turbulent mob.» So saying, he closed the window with such violence that the panes cracked, and the fragments fell down on the heads of the assailants.

«The Principal knows how to talk to the people,» said Heyboldt with pride to Roland, the mute witness of this strange scene. «He speaks their own language. He replies to a broken door with a broken window.»

Meantime a company of soldiers had arrived on double-quick, with a flourish of drums. The officer's word of command rang through the crowd, now grown suddenly quiet: «Fix bayonets! form line! march!» Yard and passages were cleared, the doors guarded; in the street the low muttering tide, forced back, made a sort of dam. Three deputies, abashed and confused, appeared at Krafft's door and craved audience. The merchant received them like a prince surrounded by his court, in the midst of his clerks, in the large counting-room. The spokesman commenced: «We ask your pardon, Herr Krafft, for what has happened.» — «For shame, that you should drag in soldiers as witnesses and peacemakers in a quiet little business affair among order-loving citizens.» — «It was reported that we had been fooled with these subscriptions, and that the entire sum had been already disposed of on the Bourse.» — «And even if that were so, am I to be blamed for it? The Southwestern Railway must raise thirty millions. Double, treble that amount is offered it. Can I prevent the necessity of reducing the subscriptions?»—«No; but they say that we poor folks shall not get a cent's worth; the big men of the Bourse have gobbled up the best bits right before our noses.»—«They say so? Who says so? Court Cooper Täubert, I ask you who says so?»—«Gracious Herr Court Banker—» «Don't Court or Gracious me. My name is Krafft, Herr Hans Heinrich Krafft. I think we know each other, Master Täubert. It is not the first time that we have done business together. You have a very snug little share in my workingmen's bank. Grain-broker Wüst, you have bought one of the houses in my street. Do I ever dun you for the installments of purchase money?» «No indeed, Herr Krafft; you are a good man, a public-spirited man, no money-maker, no leech, no Jew!» cried the triumvirate of deputies in chorus.—«I am nothing more than you are: a man of business, who works for his living, the son of a peasant, a plain simple citizen. I began in a smaller way than any of you; but I shall never forget that I am flesh of your flesh, blood of your blood. Facts have proved it. I will give you a fresh proof to-day. Go home and tell the people who have sent you, Hans Heinrich Krafft will give up the share which his house has subscribed to the Southwestern Railway, in favor of the less wealthy citizens of this city. This sum of five hundred thousand thalers shall be divided up *pro rata* among the subscriptions under five hundred dollars.»

«Heaven bless you, Herr Krafft!» stammered out the court cooper, and the grain-broker essayed to shed a tear of gratitude; the confidential clerk Herr Lange, the third of the group, caught at the hand of the patron to kiss it, with emotion. Krafft drew it back angrily. «No self-abasement, Herr Lange,» he said. «We are men of the people; let us behave as such. God bless you, gentlemen. You know my purpose. Make it known to the good people waiting outside, and see that I am rid of my billeting. Let the subscriptions be conducted quietly and in good order. Adieu, children!» The deputation withdrew. A few minutes afterwards there was heard a thundering hurrah:—«Hurrah for Herr Krafft! Three cheers for Father Krafft!» He showed himself at the window, nodded quickly and soberly, and motioned to them to disperse.

While the tumult was subsiding, Krafft and Roland retired into the private counting-room. «You have,» the latter said, «spoken nobly, acted nobly.»—«I have made a bargain, nothing more, nothing less; moreover, not a bad one.» — « How so?» — « In three months I shall buy at 70, perhaps still lower, what I am now to give up to them at 90.» — « You know that beforehand?» — « With mathematical certainty. The public expects an El Dorado in the Southwestern Railway, as it does in every new enterprise. The undertaking is a good one, it is true, or I should not have ventured upon it. But one must be able to wait until the fruit is ripe. The small holders cannot do that; they sow to-day, and to-morrow they wish to reap. At the first payment their heart and their purse are all right. At the second or third, both are gone. Upon the least rise they will throw the paper, for which they were ready to break each other's necks, upon the market, and so depreciate their property. But if some fortuitous circumstance should cause a pressure upon the money market, then they drop all that they have, in a perfect panic, for any price. I shall watch this moment, and buy. In a year or so, when the road is finished and its communications complete, the shares that were subscribed for at 90, and which I shall have bought at 60 to 70, will touch 100, or higher.»

« That is to say,» said Roland, thoughtfully, « you will gain at the expense of those people whose confidence you have aroused, then satisfied with objects of artificial value, and finally drained for yourself.» « Business is business,» replied the familiar harsh voice. « Unless I become a counterfeiter or a forger I can do nothing more than to convert other persons' money into my own; of course, in an honest way.» — « And you do this, without fearing lest one day some one mightier and luckier than you should do the same to you?» — « I must be prepared for that; I am prepared.» — « Also for the storm,— not one of your own creating, but one sent by the wrath of God, that shall scatter all this paper splendor of our times, and reduce this appalling social inequality of ours to a universal zero?» « Let us quietly abide this Last Day,» laughed the banker, taking the artist by the arm.

THE WATCHMAN

The last faint twinkle now goes out
Up in the poet's attic;
And the roisterers, in merry rout,
Speed home with steps erratic.

Soft from the house-roofs showers the snow,
The vane creaks on the steeple,
The lanterns wag and glimmer low
In the storm by the hurrying people.

The houses all stand black and still,
The churches and taverns deserted,
And a body may now wend at his will,
With his own fancies diverted.

Not a squinting eye now looks this way,
Not a slanderous mouth is dissembling,
And a heart that has slept the livelong day
May now love and hope with trembling.

Dear Night! thou foe to each base end,
While the good still a blessing prove thee,
They say that thou art no man's friend,—
Sweet Night! how I therefore love thee!

DIOGENES LAERTIUS

(200–250 A. D. ?)

It is curious how often we are dependent, for our knowledge of some larger subject, upon a single ancient author, who would be hardly worthy of notice but for the accidental loss of the books composed by fitter and abler men. Thus, our only general description of Greece at the close of the classical period is written by a man who describes many objects that he certainly did not see, who leaves unmentioned numberless things we wish explained, and who has a genius for so misplacing an adverb as to bring confusion into the most commonplace statement. But not even to Pausanias do we proffer such grudging gratitude and such ungrateful objurgations as to Diogenes Laertius, our chief—often our sole—authority for the ‘Lives and Sayings of the Philosophers.’ His book is a fascinating one, and even amusing,—if we can forget what we so much wanted in its stead. At second or third hand, from the compendiums of the schools rather than from the original works of the great masters themselves, Diogenes does give us a fairly intelligible sketch, as a rule, of the outward life lived by each sage. This slight frame is crammed with anecdotes, evidently culled with most eager and uncritical hand from miscellaneous collections. Many of these stories are so fragmentary as to be pointless. Others are unquestionably attached to the wrong person. This method is at its maddest in the author's sketch of his namesake, the Recluse of the Tub. (One of Ali Baba's *jars*, by the way, would give a better notion of the real hermitage.) Since this «philosopher» had himself little character and no doctrines, the loose string of anecdotes, puns, and saucy answers suits all our needs. Throughout the work are scattered apocryphal letters, and feeble poetic epigrams composed by the compiler himself. The leaning of our most unphilosophic author was apparently toward Epicurus. The loss of that teacher's own works causes us to prize doubly the extensive fragments of them preserved in this relatively copious and serious study. The lover of the great Epicurean poem of Lucretius on the ‘Nature of Things’ will often be surprised to find here the source of many among the Roman poet's most striking doctrines and images. The sketch of Zeno is also an important authority on Stoicism. Instruction in these particular chapters, then, and rich diversion elsewhere, await the reader of this most gossipy, formless, and uncritical volume. The English reader, by the way, ought to be provided with something better than the «Bohn» version. This adds a goodly harvest of ludicrous misprints and other errors of every kind to Diogenes's own mixture of borrowed wisdom and native silliness. The classical student will prefer the *Didot* edition by Cobet, with the Latin version in parallel columns.

It has been thought desirable to offer here a version, slightly abridged, of Diogenes's chapter on Socrates. The original sources, in Plato's and Xenophon's extant works, will almost always explain, or correct, the statements of Diogenes. Such wild shots as the assertion that the plague repeatedly visited Athens, striking down *every inhabitant* save the temperate Socrates, hardly need a serious rejoinder. Diogenes cannot even speak with approximate accuracy of Socrates's famous Dæmon or Inward Monitor. We know, on the best authority, that it prophesied nothing, even proposed nothing, but only vetoed the rasher impulses of its human companion. But to apply the tests of mere accuracy to Diogenes would be like criticizing Uncle Remus for his sins against English syntax.

Of the author's life we know nothing. Our assignment of him to the third century is based merely on the fact that he quotes writers of the second, and is himself in turn cited by somewhat later authors.

LIFE OF SOCRATES

From the ‹Lives and Sayings of the Philosophers›

SOCRATES was the son of Sophroniscus a sculptor and Phænarete a midwife [as Plato also states in the ‹Theætetus›], and an Athenian, of the deme Alopeke. He was believed to aid Euripides in composing his dramas. Hence Mnesimachus speaks thus:—

«This is Euripides's new play, the ‹Phrygians›:
And Socrates has furnished him the sticks.»

And again:—

«Euripides, Socratically patched.»

Callias also, in his ‹Captives,› says:—

A—«Why art so solemn, putting on such airs?
B— Indeed I may; the cause is Socrates.»

Aristophanes, in the ‹Clouds,› again, remarks:—

«And this is he who for Euripides
Composed the talkative wise tragedies.»

He was a pupil of Anaxagoras, according to some authorities, but also of Damon, as Alexander states in his 'Successions.' After the former's condemnation he became a disciple of Archelaus the natural philosopher. But Douris says he was a slave, and carried stones. Some say, too, that the Graces on the Acropolis are his; they are clothed figures. Hence, they say, Timon in his 'Silli' declares: —

> «From them proceeded the stone-polisher,
> Prater on law, enchanter of the Greeks,
> Who taught the art of subtle argument,
> The nose-in-air, mocker of orators,
> Half Attic, the adept in irony.»

For he was also clever in discussion. But the Thirty Tyrants, as Xenophon tells us, forbade him to teach the art of arguing. Aristophanes also brings him on in comedy, making the Worse Argument seem the better. He was moreover the first, with his pupil Æschines, to teach oratory. He was likewise the first who conversed about life, and the first of the philosophers who came to his end by being condemned to death. We are also told that he lent out money. At least, investing it, he would collect what was due, and then after spending it invest again. But Demetrius the Byzantine says it was Crito who, struck by the charm of his character, took him out of the workshop and educated him.

Realizing that natural philosophy was of no interest to men, it is said, he discussed ethics, in the workshops and in the agora, and used to say he was seeking

> «Whatsoever is good in human dwellings, or evil.»

And very often, we are told, when in these discussions he conversed too violently, he was beaten or had his hair pulled out, and was usually laughed to scorn. So once when he was kicked, and bore it patiently, some one expressed surprise; but he said, «If an ass had kicked me, would I bring an action against him?»

Foreign travel he did not require, as most men do, except when he had to serve in the army. At other times, remaining in Athens, he disputed in argumentative fashion with those who conversed with him, not so as to deprive them of their belief, but to strive for the ascertainment of truth. They say Euripides gave him the work of Heraclitus, and asked him, «What do you think of it?» And he said, «What I understood is fine; I suppose what I did not understand is, too; only it needs a Delian diver!» He attended also to physical training, and was in excellent condition. Moreover, he went on the expedition to Amphipolis, and when Xenophon had fallen from his horse in the battle of Delium he picked him up and saved him. Indeed, when all the other Athenians were fleeing he retreated slowly, turning about calmly, and on the lookout to defend himself if attacked. He also joined the expedition to Potidæa—by sea, for the war prevented a march by land; and it was there he was said once to have remained standing in one position all night. There too, it is said, he was pre-eminent in valor, but gave up the prize to Alcibiades, of whom he is stated to have been very fond. Ion of Chios says moreover that when young he visited Samos with Archelaus, and Aristotle states that he went to Delphi. Favorinus again, in the first book of his 'Commentaries,' says he went to the Isthmus.

He was also very firm in his convictions and devoted to the democracy, as was evident from his not yielding to Critias and his associates when they bade him bring Leon of Salamis, a wealthy man, to them to be put to death. He was also the only one who opposed the condemnation of the ten generals. When he could have escaped from prison, too, he would not. The friends who wept at his fate he reproved, and while in prison he composed those beautiful discourses.

He was also temperate and austere. Once, as Pamphila tells us in the seventh book of her 'Commentaries,' Alcibiades offered him a great estate, on which to build a house; and he said, «If I needed sandals, and you offered me a hide from which to make them for myself, I should be laughed at if I took it.» Often, too, beholding the multitude of things for sale, he would say to himself, «How many things I do not need!» He used constantly to repeat aloud these iambic verses:—

«But silver plate and garb of purple dye
To actors are of use,—but not in life.»

He disdained the tyrants,—Archelaus of Macedon, Scopas of Crannon, Eurylochus of Melissa,—not accepting gifts from them nor visiting them. He was so regular in his way of living that he was frequently the only one not ill when Athens was attacked by the plague.

Aristotle says he wedded two wives, the first Xanthippe, who bore him Lamprocles, and the second Myrto, daughter of

Aristides the Just, whom he received without dowry and by whom he had Sophroniscus and Menexenus. Some however say he married Myrto first; and some again that he had them both at once, as the Athenians on account of scarcity of men passed a law to increase the population, permitting any one to marry one Athenian woman and have children by another; so Socrates did this.

He was a man also able to disdain those who mocked him. He prided himself on his simple manner of living, and never exacted any pay. He used to say he who ate with best appetite had least need of delicacies, and he who drank with best appetite had least need to seek a draught not at hand; and that he who had fewest needs was nearest the gods. This indeed we may learn from the comic poets, who in their very ridicule covertly praise him. Thus Aristophanes says:—

«O thou who hast righteously set thy heart on attaining to noble wisdom,
How happy the life thou wilt lead among the Athenians and the [Hellenes!
Shrewdness and memory both are thine, and energy unwearied
Of mind; and never art thou tired from standing or from walking.
By cold thou art not vexed at all, nor dost thou long for breakfast.
Wine thou dost shun, and gluttony, and every other folly.»

Ameipsias also, bringing him upon the stage in the philosopher's cloak, says:—

«O Socrates, best among few men, most foolish of many, thou also
Art come unto us; thou'rt a patient soul; but where didst get that doublet?
That wretched thing in mockery was presented by the cobblers!
Yet though so hungry, he never however has stooped to flatter a mortal.»

This disdain and arrogance in Socrates has also been exposed by Aristophanes, who says:—

«Along the streets you haughtily strut; your eyes roll hither and thither:
Barefooted, enduring discomforts, you go with countenance solemn among us.»

And yet sometimes, suiting himself to the occasion, he dressed finely; as when for instance in Plato's 'Symposium' he goes to Agathon's.

He was a man able both to urge others to action, and to dissuade them. Thus, when he conversed with Theætetus on Knowledge, he sent him away inspired, as Plato says. Again, when Euthyphron had indicted his own father for manslaughter, by conversing with him on piety Socrates turned him from his purpose. Lysis also by his exhortations he rendered a most moral man. He was moreover skillful in fitting his arguments to the circumstances. He changed the feeling of his son Lamprocles when he was enraged with his mother, as Xenophon somewhere relates. Plato's brother Glaucon, who wished to be active in politics, he dissuaded because of his inexperience, as Xenophon states; but Charmides on the other hand, who was well fitted, he urged on. He roused the spirit of Iphicrates the general also, pointing out to him the cocks of Midias the barber fighting those of Callias. He said it was strange that every man could tell easily how many sheep he had, but could not call by name the friends whom he had acquired, so negligent were men in that regard. Once seeing Euclid devoting great pains to captious arguments, he said, "O Euclid, you will be able to manage sophists — but men, never!" For he thought hair-splitting on such matters useless, as Plato also says in his 'Euthydemus.'

When Glaucon offered him some slaves, so that he might make a profit on them, he did not take them.

He praised leisure as the best of possessions, as Xenophon also says in his 'Symposium.' He used to say, too, that there was but one good — knowledge; and one evil — ignorance. Wealth and birth, he said, had no value, but were on the contrary wholly an evil. So when some one told him Antisthenes's mother was a Thracian, "Did you think," quoth he, "so fine a man must be the child of two Athenians?" When Phædo had been captured in war and shamefully enslaved, Socrates bade Crito ransom him, and made him a philosopher.

He also learned, when already an old man, to play the lyre, saying there was no absurdity in learning what one did not know. He used to dance frequently, too, thinking this exercise helpful to health. This Xenophon tells us in the 'Symposium.'

He used to say that his Dæmon foretold future events: and that he knew nothing, except that very fact that he did know nothing. Those who bought at a great price what was out of season, he said, had no hope of living till the season came around. Once being asked what was virtue in a young man, he said,

« To avoid excess in all things.» He used to say one should study geometry (surveying) just enough to be able to measure land in buying and selling it.

When Euripides in the ‘Auge’ said of virtue: —

> « These things were better left to lie untouched,»

he rose up and left the theatre, saying it was absurd to think it proper to seek for a slave if he was not to be found, but to let virtue perish unregarded. When his advice was asked whether to marry or not, he said, « Whichever you do, you will regret it!» He used to say that he marveled that those who made stone statues took pains to make the stone as like the man as possible, but took none with themselves, that they might not be like the stone. He thought it proper for the young to look constantly in the mirror, so that if they had beauty they might prove themselves worthy of it, and if they were ugly, that they might conceal their ugliness by their accomplishments.

When he had invited rich friends to dinner, and Xanthippe was ashamed, he said, « Do not be troubled. If they are sensible, they will bear with us. If not, we shall care nothing for them.» Most men, he said, lived to eat; but he ate to live. As to those who showed regard for the opinions of the ignoble multitude, he said it was as if a man should reject one tetradrachm [coin] as worthless, but accept a heap of such coins as good. When Æschines said, « I am poor and have nothing else, but I give you myself,» he said, « Do you then not realize you are offering me the greatest of gifts?» To him who said, « The Athenians have condemned you to death,» he responded, « And nature has condemned them also thereto:» though some ascribe this to Anaxagoras. When his wife exclaimed, « You die innocent!» he answered, « Do you wish I were guilty?»

When a vision in sleep seemed to say: —

> « Three days hence thou'lt come to the fertile region of Phthia,»

he said to Æschines, « On the third day I shall die.» When he was to drink the hemlock, Apollodorus gave him a fine garment to die in: « But why,» quoth he, « is this garment of mine good enough to live in, but not to perish in?» To him who said, « So-and-so speaks ill of you,» he answered, « Yes, he has not learned to speak well.» When Antisthenes turned the ragged side of his cloak to the light, he remarked, « I see your vanity through your cloak.» He declared we ought to put ourselves expressly at the service of the comedy writers: «For if they say anything about us that is true, they will correct us; and if what they say be untrue, it does not concern us at all.»

When Xanthippe had first reviled him, then drenched him with water, «Didn't I tell you,» said he, «it was thundering and would soon rain?» To Alcibiades, who said Xanthippe's scolding was unbearable, he replied, «I am accustomed to it, as to a constantly creaking pulley. And you,» he added, «endure the cackling of geese.» Alcibiades said, «Yes, for they bring me eggs and goslings.» «And Xanthippe,» retorted Socrates, «bears me children.» Once when she pulled off his cloak in the agora, his friends advised him to defend himself with force. «Yes,» said he, «by Jove, so that as we fight, each of you may cry, 'Well done, Socrates!' 'Good for you, Xanthippe!'» He used to say he practiced on Xanthippe just as trainers do with spirited horses. «Just as they if they master them are able to control any other horse, so I who am accustomed to Xanthippe shall get on easily with any one else.»

It was for such words and acts as this that the Delphic priestess bore witness in his honor, giving to Chairephon that famous response:—

«Wisest of all mankind is Socrates.»

He became extremely unpopular on account of this oracle; but also because he convicted of ignorance those who had a great opinion of themselves, particularly Anytus, as Plato also says in the 'Meno.' For Anytus, enraged at the ridicule Socrates brought upon him, first urged Aristophanes and the rest on to attack him, and then induced Meletus to join in indicting him for impiety and for corrupting the young men. Plato in the 'Apology' says there were three accusers,—Anytus, Lycon, and Meletus: Anytus being incensed at him in behalf of the artisans and politicians, Lycon for the orators, and Meletus for the poets, all of whom Socrates pulled to pieces. The sworn statement of the plaintiffs ran as follows; for it is still recorded, Favorinus says, in the State archives:—«Socrates is guilty, not honoring the gods whom the State honors, but introducing other strange divinities; and he is further guilty of corrupting the young. Penalty, death.»

When Lysias wrote a speech for his defense, he read it, and said, «A fine speech, Lysias, but not suited to me;» for indeed it was rather a lawyer's plea than a philosopher's. Lysias said, « But why, if the speech is a fine one, should it not be suitable for you ? » Socrates replied, « Would not fine robes, then, and sandals, be unfitting for me ? »

While he was on trial, it is stated that Plato ascended the *bema* and began, « Being the youngest, O men of Athens, of all who ever came upon the bema » — but at this point the judges cried out, « Come down! come down! » So he was convicted by two hundred and eighty-one votes more than were cast for his acquittal. And when the judges considered what penalty or fine he should receive, he said he would pay five-and-twenty drachmæ. Euboulides says he agreed to pay a hundred, but when the judges expressed their indignation aloud, he said, « For what I have done, I consider the proper return to be support at the public expense in the town hall. » But they condemned him to death, the vote being larger than before by eighty.

Not many days later he drank the hemlock in the prison, after uttering many noble words, recorded by Plato in the 'Phædo.' According to some, he wrote a poem beginning —

« Greeting, Apollo of Delos, and Artemis, youthful and famous. »

He also versified, not very successfully, a fable of Æsop's which began —

« Æsop once to the people who dwell in the city of Corinth
Said, 'Let virtue be judged not by the popular voice.' »

So he passed from among men; but straightway the Athenians repented of their action, so that they closed the gymnasia, and exiling the other accusers, put Meletus to death. Socrates they honored with a statue of bronze, the work of Lysippus, which was set up in the Pompeion. Anytus in exile, entering Heraclea, was warned out of town that very day.

The Athenians have had the same experience not only in Socrates's case, but with many others. Indeed, it is stated that they fined Homer as a madman, and adjudged Tyrtæus to be crazy. Euripides reproves them in the 'Palamedes,' saying: —

« Ye have slain, ye have slain the all-wise, the harmless nightingale of the Muses. »

That is so. But Philochorus says Euripides died before Socrates.

Socrates and Euripides were both disciples of Anaxagoras. It appears to me, too, that Socrates did talk on natural philosophy. In fact, Xenophon says so, though he states that Socrates held discourse only upon moral questions. Plato indeed, in the ‹Apology,› mentioning Anaxagoras and other natural philosophers, himself says of them things whereof Socrates denies any knowledge; yet it is all ascribed to Socrates.

Aristotle states that a certain mage from Syria came to Athens, and among other prophecies concerning Socrates foretold that his death would be a violent one.

The following verses upon him are our own:—

Drink, in the palace of Zeus, O Socrates, seeing that truly
Thou by a god wert called wise, who is wisdom itself.
Foolish Athenians, who to thee offered the potion of hemlock,
Through thy lips themselves draining the cup to the dregs!

Translated for ‹A Library of the World's Best Literature,› by William C. Lawton.

EXAMPLES OF GREEK WIT AND WISDOM

BIAS

Once he was on a voyage with some impious men. The vessel was overtaken by a storm, and they began to call upon the gods for aid. But Bias said, «Be silent, so they may not discover that you are aboard our ship!»

He declared it was pleasanter to decide a dispute between his enemies than between friends. «For of two friends,» he explained, «one is sure to become my enemy; but of two enemies I make one friend.»

PLATO

It is said Socrates, in a dream, seemed to be holding on his knees a cygnet, which suddenly grew wings and flew aloft, singing sweetly. Next day Plato came to him; and Socrates said he was the bird.

It is told that Plato, once seeing a man playing at dice, reproved him. «The stake is but a trifle,» said the other. «Yes, but,» responded Plato, «the habit is no trifle.»

Once when Xenocrates came into Plato's house, the latter bade him scourge his slave for him, explaining that he could not do it himself, because he was angry. Again, he said to one of his slaves, «You would have had a beating if I were not angry.»

ARISTIPPUS

DIONYSIUS once asked him why it is that the philosophers are seen at rich men's doors, not the rich men at the doors of the sages. Aristippus replied, «Because the wise realize what they lack, but the rich do not.» On a repetition of the taunt on another occasion he retorted, «Yes, and physicians are seen at sick men's doors; yet none would choose to be the patient rather than the leech!»

Once when overtaken by a storm on a voyage to Corinth, he was badly frightened. Somebody said to him, «We ordinary folk are not afraid, but you philosophers play the coward.» «Yes,» was his reply, «we are not risking the loss of any such wretched life as yours.»

Some one reproached him for his extravagance in food. He answered, «If you could buy these same things for threepence, wouldn't you do it?»—«Oh yes.»—«Why then, 'tis not I who am too fond of the luxurious food, but you that are over-fond of your money!»

ARISTOTLE

WHEN asked, «What is Hope?» he answered, «The dream of a man awake.» Asked what grows old quickest, he replied, «Gratitude.» When told that some one had slandered him in his absence, he said, «He may beat me too—in my absence!» Being asked how much advantage the educated have over the ignorant, he replied, «As much as the living over the dead.»

Some one asked him why we spend much time in the society of the beautiful. «That,» he said, «is a proper question for a blind man!» [*Cf.* Emerson's ‹Rhodora.›]

Once being asked how we should treat our friends, he said, «As we would wish them to treat us.» Asked what a friend is, he answered, «One soul abiding in two bodies.»

THEOPHRASTUS

To a man who at a feast was persistently silent, he remarked, «If you are ignorant, you are acting wisely; if you are intelligent, you are behaving foolishly.»

DEMETRIUS

It was a saying of his that to friends in prosperity we should go when invited, but to those in misfortune unbidden.

When told that the Athenians had thrown down his statues, he answered, «But not my character, for which they erected them.»

ANTISTHENES

Some one asked him what he gained from philosophy. He replied, «The power to converse with myself.»

He advised the Athenians to pass a vote that asses were horses. When they thought that irrational, he said, «But certainly, your generals are not such because they have learned anything, but simply because you have elected them!»

DIOGENES

He used to say that when in the course of his life he saw pilots, and physicians, and philosophers, he thought man the most sensible of animals; but when he saw interpreters of dreams, and soothsayers, and those who paid attention to them, and those puffed up by fame or wealth, he believed no creature was sillier than man.

Some said to him, «You are an old man. Take life easy now.» He replied, «And if I were running the long-distance race, should I when nearing the goal slacken, and not rather exert myself?»

When he saw a child drink out of his hands, he took the cup out of his wallet and flung it away, saying, «A child has beaten me in simplicity.»

He used to argue thus, «All things belong to the gods. The wise are the friends of the gods. The goods of friends are common property. Therefore all things belong to the wise.»

To one who argued that *motion* was impossible, he made no answer, but rose and walked away.

When the Athenians urged him to be initiated into the Mysteries, assuring him that in Hades those who were initiated have the front seats, he replied, «It is ludicrous, if Agesilaus and Epaminondas are to abide in the mud, and some ignoble wretches who are initiated are to dwell in the Isles of the Blest!»

Plato made the definition «Man is a two-footed featherless animal,» and was much praised for it. Diogenes plucked a fowl and brought it into his school, saying «This is Plato's man!» So the addition was made to the definition, «with broad nails.»

When a man asked him what was the proper hour for lunch, he said, «If you are rich, when you please; if you are poor, when you can get it.»

He used often to shout aloud that an easy life had been given by the gods to men, but they had covered it from sight in their search for honey-cakes and perfumes and such things.

The musician who was always left alone by his hearers he greeted with «Good morning, cock!» When the other asked him the reason, he said, «Because your music starts everybody up.»

When an exceedingly superstitious man said to him, «With one blow I will break your head!» he retorted, «And with a sneeze at your left side I will make you tremble.»

When asked what animal had the worst bite, he said, «Of wild beasts, the sycophant; and of tame creatures, the flatterer.»

Being asked when was the proper time to marry, he responded, «For young men, not yet; and for old men, not at all.»

When he was asked what sort of wine he enjoyed drinking, he answered, «Another man's.» [Of a different temper was Dante, who knew too well «how salt the bread of others tastes!»]

Some one advised him to hunt up his runaway slave. But he replied, «It is ridiculous if Manes lives without Diogenes, but Diogenes cannot without Manes.»

When asked why men give to beggars, but not to philosophers, he said, «Because they expect themselves to become lame and blind; but philosophers, never!»

CLEANTHES

When a comic actor apologized for having ridiculed him from the stage, he answered gently, «It would be preposterous, when

Bacchus and Hercules bear the raillery of the poets without showing any anger, if I should be indignant when I chance to be attacked.»

PYTHAGORAS

Precepts

Do NOT stir the fire with a sword.

Do not devour your heart.

Always have your bed packed up.

Do not walk in the main street.

Do not cherish birds with crooked talons.

Avoid a sharp sword.

When you travel abroad, look not back at your own borders. [Diogenes explains this: be resigned to death.]

Consider nothing exclusively your own.

Destroy no cultivated tree, or harmless animal.

Modesty and decorum consist in never yielding to laughter, and yet not looking stern. [*Cf.* Emerson on Manners.]

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ISAAC D'ISRAELI

(1766–1848)

Among the writers whose education and whose tastes were the outcome of the classicism of the eighteenth century, yet whose literary life lapped over into the Victorian epoch, was Isaac D'Israeli, born at Enfield in May 1766. D'Israeli was of Jewish origin, his ancestors having fled from the Spanish persecutions of the fifteenth century to find a home in Venice, whence a younger branch migrated to England.

Isaac D'Israeli

At the time of his birth his family had stood for generations among the foremost English Jews, his father having been made a citizen by special legislation. The boy, however, did not inherit the commercial spirit which had established his house. He was a lover of books and a dreamer of dreams, and so early developed literary tendencies that his frightened father sent him off to Amsterdam to school, in the hope of curing proclivities so dangerous. Here he became familiar with the works of the Encyclopædists, and adopted the theories of Rousseau. On returning to England in his nineteenth year, he replied to his father's proposition that he should enter a commercial house at Bordeaux, by a long poem in which he passionately inveighed against the commercial spirit, and avowed himself a student of philosophy and letters. His father's reluctant acquiescence was obtained at last through the good offices of the laureate Pye, to whom the youth had already dedicated his first book, ‹A Defence of Poetry.›

At the outset of his career he found himself received with consideration by the men whose acquaintance he most desired. Following the fashion of the day, and inspired by the books of anecdotes so successfully published by his friend Douce, D'Israeli in 1791 produced anonymously a small volume entitled ‹Curiosities of Literature,› the copyright of which he magnanimously presented to his publisher. The extraordinary success of this book can be accounted for only by the curious taste of the time, which still reflected the more unworthy traditions of the Addisonian era. It was an age of clubs and tea-tables, of society scandal-mongering and fireside gossip;

and the reading public welcomed a contribution whose refined dilettantism so well matched its own. The mysteries of Eleusis and the origin of wigs received the same grave attention. This popularity induced D'Israeli to buy back the copyright at a generous valuation; he enlarged the work to five volumes, which passed through twelve in his own lifetime, and still serves to illustrate a curious literary phase.

Other compilations of similar nature met the same success: ‹The Calamities of Authors,› ‹Quarrels of Authors,› and ‹Literary Recollections›; but the ‹Amenities of Literature,› his last work, is the most purely literary in form, and affords perhaps the best index to D'Israeli's abilities as a writer. The reader of to-day, however, is struck by the ephemeral nature of this criticism, which yet by a curious literary experience is keeping a place among the permanent productions of its age. The reader is everywhere impressed by the human sympathy, by the wide if rather superficial knowledge, and by innumerable felicities of expression and style, which betray the cultivated mind. To lovers of the curious the books still appeal, and they will continue to hold an honorable place among the bric-a-brac of literature.

The spirit of curiosity which characterized the mind of D'Israeli assumed its most dignified concrete form in the ‹Commentaries on the Reign of Charles I.› D'Israeli had an artistic sense of the values in a historical picture, with a keen perception of the importance of side lights; and although the book is not a great contribution to the literature of history, yet it became popular, and in July 1832 earned for its author the degree of D. C. L. from Oxford.

D'Israeli's romances were tedious tales, but his hold upon the public was secure, and the vast amount of miscellaneous matter which he published always found a delighted audience. ‹The Genius of Judaism,› a philosophical inquiry into the historical significance of the permanence of the Jewish race, showed the author's psychic limitations. He designed a history of English literature, for which he had gathered much material, but increasing blindness forced him to abandon it. Much of D'Israeli's popularity was unquestionably due to his qualities of heart. His nature was fine; he was an affectionate and devoted friend, and held an enviable position in the literary circles of the day. Campbell, Byron, Rogers, and Scott alike admired and loved him, while a host of lesser men eagerly sought his friendship.

Although brought up in the Jewish faith, D'Israeli affiliated early in life with the Church of England, in which his three sons and one daughter were baptized. He died in 1848, and was buried at Brandenham. Twenty years later his daughter-in-law, the Countess of Beaconsfield, erected at Hughenden a monument to his memory.

POETS, PHILOSOPHERS, AND ARTISTS MADE BY ACCIDENT

From ‹Curiosities of Literature›

Accident has frequently occasioned the most eminent geniuses to display their powers. It was at Rome, says Gibbon, on the fifteenth of October, 1764, as I sat musing amidst the ruins of the Capitol, while the barefooted friars were singing vespers in the Temple of Jupiter, that the idea of writing the decline and fall of the city first started to my mind.

Father Malebranche, having completed his studies in philosophy and theology without any other intention than devoting himself to some religious order, little expected the celebrity his works acquired for him. Loitering in an idle hour in the shop of a bookseller, and turning over a parcel of books, ‹L'Homme de Descartes› fell into his hands. Having dipt into some parts, he read with such delight that the palpitations of his heart compelled him to lay the volume down. It was this circumstance that produced those profound contemplations which made him the Plato of his age.

Cowley became a poet by accident. In his mother's apartment he found, when very young, Spenser's ‹Fairy Queen,› and by a continual study of poetry he became so enchanted of the Muse that he grew irrecoverably a poet.

Dr. Johnson informs us that Sir Joshua Reynolds had the first fondness of his art excited by the perusal of Richardson's Treatise.

Vaucanson displayed an uncommon genius for mechanics. His taste was first determined by an accident: when young, he frequently attended his mother to the residence of her confessor; and while she wept with repentance, he wept with weariness! In this state of disagreeable vacation, says Helvetius, he was struck with the uniform motion of the pendulum of the clock in the hall. His curiosity was roused; he approached the clock-case, and studied its mechanism; what he could not discover he guessed at. He then projected a similar machine, and gradually his genius produced a clock. Encouraged by this first success, he proceeded in his various attempts; and the genius which thus could form a clock, in time formed a fluting automaton.

If Shakespeare's imprudence had not obliged him to quit his wool trade and his town; if he had not engaged with a company of actors, and at length, disgusted with being an indifferent performer, he had not turned author, the prudent wool-seller had never been the celebrated poet.

Accident determined the taste of Molière for the stage. His grandfather loved the theatre, and frequently carried him there. The young man lived in dissipation; the father, observing it, asked in anger if his son was to be made an actor. «Would to God,» replied the grandfather, «he was as good an actor as Montrose.» The words struck young Molière; he took a disgust to his tapestry trade; and it is to this circumstance France owes her greatest comic writer.

Corneille loved; he made verses for his mistress, became a poet, composed 'Mélite,' and afterwards his other celebrated works. The discreet Corneille had remained a lawyer.

Thus it is that the devotion of a mother, the death of Cromwell, deer-stealing, the exclamation of an old man, and the beauty of a woman, have given five illustrious characters to Europe.

We owe the great discovery of Newton to a very trivial accident. When a student at Cambridge, he had retired during the time of the plague into the country. As he was reading under an apple-tree, one of the fruit fell, and struck him a smart blow on the head. When he observed the smallness of the apple, he was surprised at the force of the stroke. This led him to consider the accelerating motion of falling bodies; from whence he deduced the principle of gravity, and laid the foundation of his philosophy.

Ignatius Loyola was a Spanish gentleman who was dangerously wounded at the siege of Pampeluna. Having heated his imagination by reading the Lives of the Saints, which were brought to him in his illness instead of a romance, he conceived a strong ambition to be the founder of a religious order; whence originated the celebrated society of the Jesuits.

Rousseau found his eccentric powers first awakened by the advertisement of the singular annual subject which the Academy of Dijon proposed for that year, in which he wrote his celebrated Declamation against the arts and sciences; a circumstance which determined his future literary efforts.

La Fontaine, at the age of twenty-two, had not taken any profession or devoted himself to any pursuit. Having accidentally heard some verses of Malherbe, he felt a sudden impulse, which directed his future life. He immediately bought a Malherbe, and was so exquisitely delighted with this poet that after passing the nights in treasuring his verses in his memory, he would run in the daytime to the woods, where, concealing himself, he would recite his verses to the surrounding dryads.

Flamsteed was an astronomer by accident. He was taken from school on account of his illness, when Sacrobosco's book 'De Sphæra' having been lent to him, he was so pleased with it that he immediately began a course of astronomic studies. Pennant's first propensity to natural history was the pleasure he received from an accidental perusal of Willoughby's work on birds; the same accident, of finding on the table of his professor Reaumur's 'History of Insects,'—of which he read more than he attended to the lecture,—and having been refused the loan, gave such an instant turn to the mind of Bonnet that he hastened to obtain a copy, but found many difficulties in procuring this costly work. Its possession gave an unalterable direction to his future life: this naturalist indeed lost the use of his sight by his devotion to the microscope.

Dr. Franklin attributes the cast of his genius to a similar accident. "I found a work of Defoe's, entitled an 'Essay on Projects,' from which perhaps I derived impressions that have since influenced some of the principal events of my life."

I shall add the incident which occasioned Roger Ascham to write his 'Schoolmaster,' one of the most curious and useful treatises among our elder writers.

At a dinner given by Sir William Cecil during the plague in 1563, at his apartments at Windsor, where the Queen had taken refuge, a number of ingenious men were invited. Secretary Cecil communicated the news of the morning, that several scholars at Eton had run away on account of their master's severity, which he condemned as a great error in the education of youth. Sir William Petre maintained the contrary; severe in his own temper, he pleaded warmly in defense of hard flogging. Dr. Wootton, in softer tones, sided with the Secretary. Sir John Mason, adopting no side, bantered both. Mr. Haddon seconded the hard-hearted Sir William Petre, and adduced as an evidence that the best schoolmaster then in England was the hardest flogger. Then was it that Roger Ascham indignantly exclaimed that if such a master had an able scholar it was owing to the boy's genius and not the preceptor's rod. Secretary Cecil and others were pleased with Ascham's notions. Sir Richard Sackville was silent; but when Ascham after dinner went to the Queen to read one of the orations of Demosthenes, he took him aside, and frankly told him that though he had taken no part in the debate he would not have been absent from that conversation for a great deal; that he knew to his cost the truth Ascham had supported, for it was the perpetual flogging of such a schoolmaster that had given him an unconquerable aversion to study. And as he wished to remedy this defect in his own children, he earnestly exhorted Ascham to write his observations on so interesting a topic. Such was the circumstance which produced the admirable treatise of Roger Ascham.

THE MARTYRDOM OF CHARLES THE FIRST

From the ‹Commentaries on the Reign of Charles the First›

At Whitehall a repast had been prepared. The religious emotions of Charles had consecrated the sacrament, which he refused to mingle with human food. The Bishop, whose mind was unequal to conceive the intrepid spirit of the King, dreading lest the magnanimous monarch, overcome by the severity of the cold, might faint on the scaffold, prevailed on him to eat half a manchet of bread and taste some claret. But the more consolatory refreshment of Charles had been just imparted to him in that singular testimony from his son, who had sent a *carte blanche* to save the life of his father at any price. This was a thought on which his affections could dwell in face of the scaffold which he was now to ascend.

Charles had arrived at Whitehall about ten o'clock, and was not led to the scaffold till past one. It was said that the scaffold was not completed; it might have been more truly said that the conspirators were not ready. There was a mystery in this delay. The fate of Charles the First to the very last moment was in suspense. Fairfax, though at the time in the palace, inquired of Herbert how the King was, when the King was no more! and expressed his astonishment on hearing that the execution had just taken place. This extraordinary simplicity and abstraction from the present scene of affairs has been imputed to the General as an act of refined dissimulation, yet this seems uncertain. The Prince's *carte blanche* had been that morning confided to his hands, and he surely must have laid it before the «Grandees of the Army,» as this new order of the rulers of England was called. Fairfax, whose personal feelings respecting the King were congenial with those his lady had so memorably evinced, labored to defer for a few days the terrible catastrophe; not without the hope of being able, by his own regiment and others in the army, to prevent the deed altogether. It is probable—inexplicable as it may seem to us—that the execution of Charles the First really took place unknown to the General. Fairfax was not unaccustomed to discover that his colleagues first acted, and afterwards trusted to his own discernment.

Secret history has not revealed all that passed in those three awful hours. We know, however, that the warrant for the execution was not signed till within a few minutes before the King was led to the scaffold. In an apartment in the Palace, Ireton and Harrison were in bed together, and Cromwell, with four colonels, assembled in it. Colonel Huncks refused to sign the warrant. Cromwell would have no further delay, reproaching the Colonel as «a peevish, cowardly fellow,» and Colonel Axtell declared that he was ashamed for his friend Huncks, remonstrating with him, that «the ship is coming into the harbor, and now would he strike sail before we come to anchor?» Cromwell stepped to a table, and wrote what he had proposed to Huncks; Colonel Hacker, supplying his place, signed it, and with the ink hardly dry, carried the warrant in his hand and called for the King.

At the fatal summons Charles rose with alacrity. The King passed through the long gallery by a line of soldiers. Awe and sorrow seem now to have mingled in their countenances. Their barbarous commanders were intent on their own triumph, and no farther required the forced cry of «Justice and Execution.» Charles stepped out of an enlarged window of the Banqueting House, where a new opening leveled it with the scaffold. Charles came forward with the same indifference as «he would have entered Whitehall on a masque night,» as an intelligent observer described. The King looked towards St. James's and smiled. Curious eyes were watchful of his slightest motions; and the Commonwealth papers of the day express their surprise, perhaps their vexation, at the unaltered aspect and the firm step of the Monarch. These mean spirits had flattered themselves that he who had been cradled in royalty, who had lived years in the fields of honor, and was now, they presumed, a recreant in imprisonment,—«the grand Delinquent of England,»—as they called him, would start in horror at the block.

This last triumph at least was not reserved for them,—it was for the King. Charles, dauntless, strode «the floor of Death,» to use Fuller's peculiar but expressive phraseology. He looked on the block with the axe lying upon it, with attention; his only anxiety was that the block seemed not sufficiently raised, and that the edge of the axe might be turned by being swept by the flappings of cloaks, or blunted by the feet of some moving about the scaffold. «Take care they do not put me to pain!—Take heed of the axe! take heed of the axe!» exclaimed the King to a gentleman passing by. «Hurt not the axe; that may hurt me!» His continued anxiety concerning these *circumstances* proves that he felt not the terror of death, solely anxious to avoid the pain, for he had an idea of their cruelty. With that sedate thoughtfulness which was in all his actions, he only looked at the business of the hour. One circumstance Charles observed with a smile. They had a notion that the King would resist the executioner; on the suggestion of Hugh Peters, it is said, they had driven iron staples and ropes into the scaffold, that their victim, if necessary, might be bound down upon the block.

The King's speech has many remarkable points, but certainly nothing so remarkable as the place where it was delivered. This was the first «King's Speech» spoken from a scaffold. Time shall confirm, as history has demonstrated, his principle that «They mistook the nature of government; for people are free under a government, not by being sharers in it, but by the due administration of the laws.» «It was for this,» said Charles, «that now I am come here. If I could have given way to an arbitrary sway, for to have all laws changed according to the power of the sword, I need not have come here; and therefore I tell you that I am *the Martyr of the People!*»

SYDNEY DOBELL

(1824–1874)

Sydney Dobell, the son of a wine merchant, was born at Cranbrook in Kent. His parents, both persons of strong individuality, believed in home training, and not one of their eight children went either to school or to university. They belonged to the Broad Church Community founded by Sydney's maternal grandfather, Samuel Thompson; a church intended to recall in its principles the primitive Christian ages. The parents looked upon Sydney, their eldest-born, as destined to become the apostle of this creed. He grew up in a kind of religious fervor, with his precocious mind unnaturally stimulated; a course of conduct which materially weakened his constitution, and made him a chronic invalid at the early age of thirty-three. He read whatever books came to hand, many of them far beyond his years. At the age of eight he filled his diary with theological discussions.

Entering his father's counting-house as a mere lad, he remained to the end of his life a business man of great energy. Notwithstanding his rare poetic endowments, he never seems to have entertained a single-minded purpose to be a poet and nothing more. On the contrary, he thought the ideal and the practical life perfectly compatible, and he strove to unite in himself the poet and the man of affairs. He wrote habitually until 1856, when regular literary work was forbidden by his physicians. With characteristic energy he now turned his thoughts into other channels; identified himself with the affairs of Gloucester, where he was living, looked after his business, and was one of the first to adopt the system of industrial co-operation. The last four years of his life, a period of suffering and helplessness, he spent at Barton-End House, above the Stroud valley, where he died in the spring of 1874.

In the work of Dobell it is curious to find so few traces of the influences under which he grew up. He had every encouragement to become a writer of religious poetry; yet much of his work is philosophic and recondite. His delicate health is in a measure responsible for his failure to achieve the success which his natural endowments promised. All his literary work was done between the ages of twenty-three and thirty-three. ‹The Roman,› his first long poem, appeared in 1850. Dedicated to the Italian struggle for liberty, it showed his breadth of sympathy. In ‹Balder,› finished in 1853, Dobell is at his best both as thinker and as poet. Yet its many fine passages, its wealth of metaphor, and the exquisite songs of Amy, hardly counterbalance the remoteness of its theme, and its over-subtle analysis of morbid psychic states. It is a poem to be read in fragments, and has aptly been called a mine for poets.

With Alexander Smith he published in 1855 a series of sonnets inspired by the Crimean War. This was followed in 1856 by ‘England in War Time,’ a collection of Dobell's lyrical and descriptive poems, which possess more general human interest than any other of his books.

After continuous work was interdicted, he still contributed verse and prose to the periodicals. His essays have been collected by Professor Nichol, under the title ‘Thoughts on Art, Philosophy, and Religion.’ As a poet Dobell belongs to the so-called «spasmodic school,» a school «characterized by an undercurrent of discontent with the mystery of existence, by vain effort, unrewarded struggle, skeptical unrest, and an uneasy striving after some incomprehensible end. . . . Poetry of this kind is marked by an excess of metaphor which darkens rather than illustrates, and by a general extravagance of language. On the other hand, it manifests freshness and originality, and a rich natural beauty.» Dobell's descriptions of scenery are among the finest in English literature. His senses were abnormally acute, like those of a savage, a condition which intensified his appreciation of natural beauty. Possessing a vivid imagination and wide sympathies, he was often over-subtle and obscure. He strove to realize in himself his ideal of a poet, and during his years of ill-health gave himself up to promoting the welfare of his fellow-men; but of his seventeen years of inactivity he says:—«The keen perception of all that should be done, and that so bitterly cries for doing, accompanies the consciousness of all that I might but cannot do.»

EPIGRAM ON THE DEATH OF EDWARD FORBES

NATURE, a jealous mistress, laid him low.
He wooed and won her; and, by love made bold,
She showed him more than mortal man should know—
Then slew him lest her secret should be told.

HOW'S MY BOY?

«Ho, sailor of the sea!
How's my boy—my boy?»—
«What's your boy's name, good wife,
And in what good ship sailed he?»

«My boy John—
He that went to sea—
What care I for the ship, sailor?
My boy's my boy to me.

«You come back from the sea,
And not know my John?
I might as well have asked some landsman,
Yonder down in the town.
There's not an ass in all the parish
But knows my John.

«How's my boy—my boy?
And unless you let me know,
I'll swear you are no sailor,
Blue jacket or no—
Brass buttons or no, sailor,
Anchor and crown or no—

«Sure, his ship was the Jolly Briton—»
«Speak low, woman, speak low!»

«And why should I speak low, sailor,
About my own boy John?
If I was loud as I am proud
I'd sing him over the town!
Why should I speak low, sailor?»—
«That good ship went down.»

«How's my boy—my boy?
What care I for the ship, sailor?
I was never aboard her.
Be she afloat or be she aground,
Sinking or swimming, I'll be bound
Her owners can afford her!
I say, how's my John?»—
«Every man on board went down,
Every man aboard her.»

«How's my boy — my boy?
What care I for the men, sailor?
I'm not their mother.
How's my boy — my boy?
Tell me of him and no other!
How's my boy — my boy?»

THE SAILOR'S RETURN

This morn I lay a-dreaming,
This morn, this merry morn;
When the cock crew shrill from over the hill,
I heard a bugle horn.

And through the dream I was dreaming,
There sighed the sigh of the sea,
And through the dream I was dreaming,
This voice came singing to me: —

«High over the breakers,
Low under the lee,
Sing ho!
The billow,
And the lash of the rolling sea!

«Boat, boat, to the billow,
Boat, boat, to the lee!
Love, on thy pillow,
Art thou dreaming of me?

«Billow, billow, breaking,
Land us low on the lee!
For sleeping or waking,
Sweet love, I am coming to thee!

«High, high, o'er the breakers,
Low, low, on the lee,
Sing ho!
The billow
That brings me back to thee!»

AFLOAT AND ASHORE

«Tumble and rumble, and grumble and snort,
Like a whale to starboard, a whale to port;
Tumble and rumble, and grumble and snort,
And the steamer steams thro' the sea, love!»

«I see the ship on the sea, love;
I stand alone
On this rock;
The sea does not shock
The stone;
The waters around it are swirled,
But under my feet
I feel it go down
To where the hemispheres meet
At the adamant heart of the world.
Oh that the rock would move!
Oh that the rock would roll
To meet thee over the sea, love!
Surely my mighty love
Should fill it like a soul,
And it should bear me to thee, love;
Like a ship on the sea, love,
Bear me, bear me, to thee, love!»

«Guns are thundering, seas are sundering, crowds are wondering,
Low on our lee, love.
Over and over the cannon-clouds cover brother and lover, but over and over
The whirl-wheels trundle the sea, love;
And on through the loud pealing pomp of her cloud
The great ship is going to thee, love,
Blind to her mark, like a world through the dark,
Thundering, sundering, to the crowds wondering,
Thundering over to thee, love.»

«I have come down to thee coming to me, love;
I stand, I stand
On the solid sand;
I see thee coming to me, love;
The sea runs up to me on the sand:
I start—'tis as if thou hadst stretched thine hand
And touched me through the sea, love.
I feel as if I must die,
For there's something longs to fly,
Fly and fly, to thee, love.

As the blood of the flower ere she blows
Is beating up to the sun,
And her roots do hold her down,
And it blushes and breaks undone
In a rose,
So my blood is beating in me, love!
I see thee nigh and nigher;
And my soul leaps up like sudden fire,
My life's in the air
To meet thee there,
To meet thee coming to me, love!
Over the sea,
Coming to me,
Coming, and coming to me, love!»

«The boats are lowered: I leap in first,
Pull, boys, pull! or my heart will burst!
More! more!—lend me an oar!—
I'm thro' the breakers! I'm on the shore!
I see thee waiting for me, love!»

«A sudden storm
Of sighs and tears,
A clenching arm,
A look of years.
In my bosom a thousand cries,
A flash like light before my eyes,
And I am lost in thee, love!»

THE SOUL

From ‹Balder›

And as the mounting and descending bark,
Borne on exulting by the under deep,
Gains of the wild wave something not the wave,
Catches a joy of going and a will
Resistless, and upon the last lee foam
Leaps into air beyond it,—so the soul
Upon the Alpine ocean mountain-tossed,
Incessant carried up to heaven, and plunged
To darkness, and, still wet with drops of death,
Held into light eternal, and again
Cast down, to be again uplift in vast
And infinite succession, cannot stay
The mad momentum.

ENGLAND

From ‹Balder›

This dear English land!
This happy England, loud with brooks and birds,
Shining with harvests, cool with dewy trees,
And bloomed from hill to dell: but whose best flowers
Are daughters, and Ophelia still more fair
Than any rose she weaves; whose noblest floods
The pulsing torrent of a nation's heart;
Whose forests stronger than her native oaks
Are living men; and whose unfathomed lakes,
Forever calm, the unforgotten dead
In quiet grave-yards willowed seemly round,
O'er which To-day bends sad, and sees his face.
Whose rocks are rights, consolidate of old
Through unremembered years, around whose base
The ever-surging peoples roll and roar
Perpetual, as around her cliffs the seas
That only wash them whiter; and whose mountains,
Souls that from this mere footing of the earth
Lift their great virtues through all clouds of Fate
Up to the very heavens, and make them rise
To keep the gods above us!

AMERICA

Nor force nor fraud shall sunder us! O ye
Who north or south, or east or western land,
Native to noble sounds, say truth for truth,
Freedom for freedom, love for love, and God
For God; O ye who in eternal youth
Speak with a living and creative flood
This universal English, and do stand
Its breathing book; live worthy of that grand
Heroic utterance — parted, yet a whole,
Far, yet unsevered,—children brave and free
Of the great Mother tongue, and ye shall be
Lords of an empire wide as Shakespeare's soul,
Sublime as Milton's immemorial theme,
And rich as Chaucer's speech, and fair as Spenser's dream.

AMY'S SONG OF THE WILLOW

From ‹Balder›

The years they come, and the years they go,
Like winds that blow from sea to sea;
From dark to dark they come and go,
All in the dew-fall and the rain.
Down by the stream there be two sweet willows,
—Hush thee, babe, while the wild winds blow,—
One hale, one blighted, two wedded willows,
All in the dew-fall and the rain.

She is blighted, the fair young willow;
—Hush thee, babe, while the wild winds blow,—
She hears the spring-blood beat in the bark;
She hears the spring-leaf bud on the bough;
But she bends blighted, the wan weeping willow,
All in the dew-fall and the rain.

The stream runs sparkling under the willow,
—Hush thee, babe, while the wild winds blow,—
The summer rose-leaves drop in the stream;
The winter oak-leaves drop in the stream;
But she bends blighted, the wan weeping willow,
All in the dew-fall and the rain.

Sometimes the wind lifts the bright stream to her,
—Hush thee, babe, while the wild winds blow,—
The false stream sinks, and her tears fall faster;
Because she touched it her tears fall faster;
Over the stream her tears fall faster,
All in the sunshine or the rain.

The years they come, and the years they go;
Sing well-away, sing well-away!
And under mine eyes shines the bright life-river;
Sing well-away, sing well-away!
Sweet sounds the spring in the hale green willow,
The goodly green willow, the green waving willow,
Sweet in the willow, the wind-whispering willow;
Sing well-away, sing well-away!
But I bend blighted, the wan weeping willow,
All in the sun, and the dew, and the rain.

AUSTIN DOBSON

(1840–)

BY ESTHER SINGLETON

At first thought it seems difficult to consider Austin Dobson as belonging to the Victorian period, so entirely is he saturated with the spirit of the eighteenth century. A careful study of his verse reveals the fact that the Georgian era, seen through the vista of his poetic imagination, is divested of all that is coarse, dark, gross, and prosaic. The mental atmosphere and the types and characters that he gives, express only beauty and charm.

Austin Dobson

One approaches the poems of Austin Dobson as one stands before a rare collection of enamels, fan-mounts, jeweled snuff-boxes, and delicate carvings in ivory and silver; and after delighting in the beauty and finish of these graceful curios, passes into a gallery of paintings and water-colors, suggesting Watteau, Fragonard, Boucher, Meissonier, and Greuze. We also wander among trim box-hedges and quaint gardens of roses and bright hollyhocks; lean by sun-dials to watch the shadow of Time; and enjoy the sight of gay belles, patched and powdered and dressed in brocaded gowns and gypsy hats. Gallant beaux, such as are associated with Reynolds's portraits, appear, and hand them into sedan-chairs or lead them through stately minuets to the notes of Rameau, Couperin, and Arne.

Just as the scent of rose-leaves, lavender, and musk rises from antique Chinese jars, so Dobson's delicate verse reconstructs a life

«Of fashion gone, and half-forgotten ways.»

He is equally at home in France. Nothing could be more sympathetic and exquisite than 'A Revolutionary Relic,' 'The Curé's Progress,' 'Une Marquise,' and the 'Proverbs in Porcelain,' one of which is cited below.

In the 'Vers de Société,' as well as his other poetry, Dobson fulfills all the requirements of light verse — charm, mockery, pathos, banter, and, while apparently skimming the surface, often shows us the strange depths of the human heart. He blends so many qualities that he deserves the praise of T. B. Aldrich, who says, « Austin Dobson has the grace of Suckling and the finish of Herrick, and is easily master of both in metrical art.»

Henry Austin Dobson, the son of Mr. George Clarisse Dobson, a civil engineer, was born in Plymouth, England, January 18th 1840. His early years were spent in Anglesea, and after receiving his education in Beaumaris, Coventry, and Strasburg, he returned to England to become a civil engineer. In 1856 he entered the civil service of Great Britain, and ever since that date he has held offices in the Board of Trade. His leisure was devoted to literature, and when Anthony Trollope first issued his magazine St. Paul's in 1868, he introduced to the public the verse of Austin Dobson. In 1873 his fugitive poems were published in a small volume entitled ‹Vignettes in Rhyme› and ‹Vers de Société.› This was followed in 1877 by ‹Proverbs in Porcelain,› and both books, with additional poems, were printed again in two volumes: ‹Old World Idylls› (1883), and ‹At the Sign of the Lyre› (1885). Mr. Dobson's original essays are contained in three volumes: ‹Four Frenchwomen,› studies of Charlotte Corday, Madame Roland, the Princess de Lamballe, and Madame de Genlis (1890), and ‹Eighteenth-Century Vignettes› (first series 1892, second series 1894), which touch upon a host of picturesque and fascinating themes. He has written also several biographies: of Hogarth, of Fielding, of Steele (1886), of Goldsmith (1888), and a ‹Memoir of Horace Walpole› (1890). He has also written felicitous critical introductions to many new editions of the eighteenth-century classics.

Austin Dobson has been most happy in breathing English life into the old poems of French verse, such as ballades, villanelles, roundels, and rondeaux; and he has also written clever and satirical fables, cast in the form and temper of Gay and Prior, with quaint obsolete affectations, redolent of the classic age of Anne.

So serious is his attitude towards art, and so large his audience, that the hope expressed in the following rondeau will certainly be realized:—

In after days, when grasses high
O'er-top the stone where I shall lie,
  Though ill or well the world adjust
  My slender claim to honored dust,
I shall not question nor reply.

I shall not see the morning sky
I shall not hear the night-wind sigh;
  I shall be mute, as all men must,
    In after days.

But yet, now living, fain were I
That some one then should testify,
Saying — *He held his pen in trust*
To Art, not serving shame or lust.
Will none? — Then let my memory die
In after days!

Esther Singleton

ON A NANKIN PLATE

VILLANELLE

«Ah me, but it might have been!
Was there ever so dismal a fate?»
Quoth the little blue mandarin.

«Such a maid as was never seen:
She passed, tho' I cried to her, ‹Wait,›—
Ah me, but it might have been!

«I cried, ‹O my Flower, my Queen,
Be mine!› — 'Twas precipitate,»
Quoth the little blue mandarin.

«But then . . . she was just sixteen,—
Long-eyed, as a lily straight,—
Ah me, but it might have been!

«As it was, from her palankeen
She laughed — ‹You're a week too late!›»
(Quoth the little blue mandarin.)

«That is why, in a mist of spleen
I mourn on this Nankin Plate.
Ah me, but it might have been!»
Quoth the little blue mandarin.

THE OLD SEDAN-CHAIR

«What's not destroyed by Time's devouring Hand?
Where's Troy,—and where's the May-Pole in the Strand?»
—BRAMSTON'S 'ART OF POLITICKS.'

IT STANDS in the stable-yard, under the eaves,
Propped up by a broomstick and covered with leaves;
It once was the pride of the gay and the fair,
But now 'tis a ruin,—that old Sedan-chair!

It is battered and tattered,—it little avails
That once it was lacquered, and glistened with nails;
For its leather is cracked into lozenge and square
Like a canvas by Wilkie,—that old Sedan-chair.

See, here come the bearing-straps; here were the holes
For the poles of the bearers—when once there were poles;
It was cushioned with silk, it was wadded with hair,
As the birds have discovered,—that old Sedan-chair.

«Where's Troy?» says the poet! Look; under the seat
Is a nest with four eggs; 'tis a favored retreat
Of the Muscovy hen, who has hatched, I dare swear,
Quite an army of chicks in that old Sedan-chair.

And yet—Can't you fancy a face in the frame
Of the window,—some high-headed damsel or dame,
Be-patched and be-powdered, just set by the stair,
While they raise up the lid of that old Sedan-chair?

Can't you fancy Sir Plume, as beside her he stands,
With his ruffles a-droop on his delicate hands,
With his cinnamon coat, with his laced solitaire,
As he lifts her out light from that old Sedan-chair?

Then it swings away slowly. Ah, many a league
It has trotted 'twixt sturdy-legged Terence and Teague;
Stout fellows!—but prone, on a question of fare,
To brandish the poles of that old Sedan-chair!

It has waited by portals where Garrick has played;
It has waited by Heidegger's «Grand Masquerade»;
For my Lady Codille, for my Lady Bellair,
It has waited—and waited, that old Sedan-chair!

Oh, the scandals it knows! Oh, the tales it could tell
Of Drum and Ridotto, of Rake and of Belle,—
Of Cock-fight and Levee, and (scarcely more rare!)
Of Fête-days at Tyburn, that old Sedan-chair!

« *Heu! quantum mutata,* » I say as I go.
It deserves better fate than a stable-yard, though!
We must furbish it up, and dispatch it,—« With Care,»—
To a Fine-Art Museum—that old Sedan-chair.

THE BALLAD OF PROSE AND RHYME

When the ways are heavy with mire and rut,
In November fogs, in December snows,
When the North Wind howls, and the doors are shut,—
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever a scent from the whitethorn blows,
And the jasmine-stars at the casement climb,
And a Rosalind-face at the lattice shows,
Then hey! for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

When the brain gets dry as an empty nut,
When the reason stands on its squarest toes,
When the mind (like a beard) has a «formal cut,»—
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever the May-blood stirs and glows,
And the young year draws to the «golden prime,»
And Sir Romeo sticks in his ear a rose,—
Then hey! for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

In a theme where the thoughts have a pedant-strut,
In a changing quarrel of «Ayes» and «Noes,»
In a starched procession of «If» and «But,»—
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever a soft glance softer grows
And the light hours dance to the trysting-time,
And the secret is told «that no one knows,»—
Then hey! for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

ENVOY

In the work-a-day world,—for its needs and woes,
There is place and enough for the pains of prose;
But whenever the May-bells clash and chime,
Then hey! for the ripple of laughing rhyme!

THE CURÉ'S PROGRESS

Monsieur the Curé down the street
Comes with his kind old face,—
With his coat worn bare, and his straggling hair,
And his green umbrella-case.

You may see him pass by the little «*Grande Place,*»
And the tiny «*Hôtel-de-Ville*»*;*
He smiles as he goes, to the *fleuriste* Rose,
And the *pompier* Théophile.

He turns as a rule through the «*Marché*» cool,
Where the noisy fishwives call;
And his compliment pays to the «*belle Thérèse,*»
As she knits in her dusky stall.

There's a letter to drop at the locksmith's shop,
And Toto, the locksmith's niece,
Has jubilant hopes, for the Curé gropes
In his tails for a *pain d'épice.*

There's a little dispute with a merchant of fruit
Who is said to be heterodox,
That will ended be with a «*Ma foi, oui!*»
And a pinch from the Curé's box.

There is also a word that no one heard
To the furrier's daughter Lou;
And a pale cheek fed with a flickering red,
And a «*Bon Dieu garde M'sieu!*»

But a grander way for the *Sous-Préfet,*
And a bow for Ma'am'selle Anne;
And a mock «off-hat» to the Notary's cat,
And a nod to the Sacristan:—

For ever through life the Curé goes
With a smile on his kind old face—
With his coat worn bare, and his straggling hair,
And his green umbrella-case.

«GOOD-NIGHT, BABETTE»

«Si vieillesse pouvait!»

SCENE.—*A small neat room. In a high Voltaire chair sits a white-haired old gentleman.*

M. VIEUXBOIS [*turning querulously*]

Day of my life! Where *can* she get?
BABETTE! I say! BABETTE!—BABETTE!

BABETTE [*entering hurriedly*]

Coming, M'sieu'! If M'sieu' speaks
So loud, he won't be well for weeks!

M. VIEUXBOIS

Where have you been?

BABETTE

Why, M'sieu' knows:—
April! . . . Ville-d' Avray! . . . Ma'm'selle ROSE!

M. VIEUXBOIS

Ah! I am old,—and I forget.
Was the place growing green, BABETTE?

BABETTE

But of a greenness!—Yes, M'sieu'!
And then the sky so blue!—so blue!
And when I dropped my *immortelle*,
How the birds sang!
[*Lifting her apron to her eyes.*]
This poor Ma'm'selle!

M. VIEUXBOIS

You're a good girl, BABETTE, but she,—
She was an angel, verily.
Sometimes I think I see her yet
Stand smiling by the cabinet;
And once, I know, she peeped and laughed
Betwixt the curtains. . . .
Where's the draught?

[*She gives him a cup.*]

Now I shall sleep, I think, BABETTE;—
Sing me your Norman *chansonnette*.

BABETTE [*sings*]

«*Once at the Angelus*
(Ere I was dead),
Angels all glorious
Came to my bed;—
Angels in blue and white,
Crowned on the head.»

M. VIEUXBOIS [*drowsily*]

«She was an Angel» . . . «Once she laughed» . . .
What! was I dreaming?
Where's the draught?

BABETTE [*showing the empty cup*]

The draught, M'sieu'?

M. VIEUXBOIS

How I forget!
I am so old! But sing, BABETTE!

BABETTE [*sings*]

«*One was the Friend I left*
Stark in the Snow;
One was the Wife that died
Long,—long ago;
One was the Love I lost—
How could she know?»

M. VIEUXBOIS [*murmuring*]

Ah PAUL! . . . old PAUL! . . . EULALIE, too!
And ROSE . . . And O! «the sky so blue!»

BABETTE [*sings*]

«*One had my Mother's eyes,*
Wistful and mild;
One had my Father's face;
One was a Child:
All of them bent to me,—
Bent down and smiled!»

[He is asleep!]

M. VIEUXBOIS [*almost inaudibly*]

How I forget!
I am so old! . . . Good-night, BABETTE!

THE LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S

A Proper New Ballad of the Country and the Town

«Phyllida amo ante alias.»—Virgil.

The ladies of St. James's
Go swinging to the play;
Their footmen run before them
With a «Stand by! Clear the way!»
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
She takes her buckled shoon,
When we go out a-courting
Beneath the harvest moon.

The ladies of St. James's
Wear satin on their backs;
They sit all night at *Ombre*,
With candles all of wax:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
She dons her russet gown,
And runs to gather May-dew
Before the world is down.

The ladies of St. James's!
They are so fine and fair,
You'd think a box of essences
Was broken in the air:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
The breath of heath and furze,
When breezes blow at morning,
Is not so fresh as hers.

The ladies of St. James's!
They're painted to the eyes;
Their white it stays forever,
Their red it never dies:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Her color comes and goes;
It trembles to a lily,—
It wavers like a rose.

The ladies of St. James's!
You scarce can understand
The half of all their speeches,
Their phrases are so grand:

But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Her shy and simple words
Are clear as after rain-drops
The music of the birds.

The ladies of St. James's!
They have their fits and freaks;
They smile on you — for seconds;
They frown on you — for weeks:
But Phyllida, my Phyllida!
Come either storm or shine,
From Shrove-tide unto Shrove-tide,
Is always true — and mine.

My Phyllida! my Phyllida!
I care not though they heap
The hearts of all St. James's,
And give me all to keep;
I care not whose the beauties
Of all the world may be,—
For Phyllida, my Phyllida,
Is all the world to me.

DORA *VERSUS* ROSE

«The Case is Proceeding»

FROM the tragic-est novels at Mudie's —
At least on a practical plan —
To the tales of mere Hodges and Judys,
One love is enough for a man.
But no case that I ever yet met is
Like mine: I am equally fond
Of Rose, who a charming brunette is,
And Dora, a blonde.

Each rivals the other in powers —
Each waltzes, each warbles, each paints —
Miss Rose, chiefly tumble-down towers;
Miss Do., perpendicular saints.
In short, to distinguish is folly;
'Twixt the pair I am come to the pass
Of Macheath, between Lucy and Polly,—
Or Buridan's ass.

If it happens that Rosa I've singled
  For a soft celebration in rhyme,
Then the ringlets of Dora get mingled
  Somehow with the tune and the time;
Or I painfully pen me a sonnet
  To an eyebrow intended for Do.'s,
And behold I am writing upon it
      The legend, « To Rose.»

Or I try to draw Dora (my blotter
  Is all over scrawled with her head),
If I fancy at last that I've got her,
  It turns to her rival instead;
Or I find myself placidly adding
  To the rapturous tresses of Rose
Miss Dora's bud-mouth, and her madding,
      Ineffable nose.

Was there ever so sad a dilemma?
  For Rose I would perish (*pro tem.*);
For Dora I'd willingly stem a—
  (Whatever might offer to stem);
But to make the invidious election,—
  To declare that on either one's side
I've a scruple,—a grain,—more affection,
      I *cannot* decide.

And as either so hopelessly nice is,
  My sole and my final resource
Is to wait some indefinite crisis,—
  Some feat of molecular force,
To solve me this riddle conducive
  By no means to peace or repose,
Since the issue can scarce be inclusive
      Of Dora *and* Rose.

(AFTER-THOUGHT)

But perhaps if a third (say, a Norah),
  Not quite so delightful as Rose,
Nor wholly so charming as Dora,
  Should appear, is it wrong to suppose,—
As the claims of the others are equal,—
  And flight—in the main—is the best,—
That I might . . . But no matter,—the sequel
      Is easily guessed.

UNE MARQUISE

A RHYMED MONOLOGUE IN THE LOUVRE

«Belle Marquise, vos beaux yeux me font mourir d'amour.»
—MOLIÈRE.

I

As you sit there at your ease,
O Marquise!
And the men flock round your knees
Thick as bees,
Mute at every word you utter,
Servants to your least frill-flutter,
«Belle Marquise!»
As you sit there, growing prouder,
And your ringed hands glance and go,
And your fan's *frou-frou* sounds louder,
And your «*beaux yeux*» flash and glow;—
Ah, you used them on the Painter,
As you know,
For the Sieur Larose spoke fainter,
Bowing low,
Thanked Madame and Heaven for Mercy
That each sitter was not Circe,—
Or at least he told you so;—
Growing proud, I say, and prouder
To the crowd that come and go,
Dainty Deity of Powder,
Fickle Queen of Fop and Beau,
As you sit where lustres strike you,
Sure to please,
Do we love you most, or like you,
«Belle Marquise!»

II

You are fair; oh yes, we know it
Well, Marquise;
For he swore it, your last poet,
On his knees;
And he called all heaven to witness
Of his ballad and its fitness,
«Belle Marquise!»
You were everything in *ère*
(With exception of *sévère*),—

You were *cruelle* and *rebelle*,
With the rest of rhymes as well;
You were «*Reine*» and «*Mère d'Amour*»;
   You were «*Vénus à Cythère*»;
«*Sappho mise en Pompadour*,»
   And «*Minerve en Parabère*»;
You had every grace of heaven
   In your most angelic face,
With the nameless finer leaven
   Lent of blood and courtly race;
And he added, too, in duty,
Ninon's wit and Boufflers's beauty;
And La Vallière's *yeux veloutés*
                                   Followed these;
And you liked it, when he said it
                                   (On his knees),
And you kept it, and you read it,
                                   «*Belle Marquise!*»

III

Yet with us your toilet graces
                                   Fail to please,
And the last of your last faces,
                                   And your *mise*;
For we hold you just as real,
                                   «*Belle Marquise!*»
As your *Bergers* and *Bergères*,
Tes d'Amour and *Batelières*;
As your *parcs*, and your Versailles,
Gardens, grottoes, and *socailles*;
As your Naiads and your trees;—
Just as near the old ideal
                                   Calm and ease,
As the Venus there by Coustou,
   That a fan would make quite flighty,
Is to her the gods were used to,—
   Is to grand Greek Aphroditè,
                                   Sprung from seas.
You are just a porcelain trifle,
                                   «*Belle Marquise!*»
Just a thing of puffs and patches
Made for madrigals and catches,
Not for heart-wounds, but for scratches,
                                   O Marquise!

Just a pinky porcelain trifle,
«*Belle Marquise!*»
Wrought in rarest *rose-Dubarry*,
Quick at verbal point and parry,
Clever, doubtless;—but to marry,
No, Marquise!

IV

For your Cupid, you have clipped him,
Rouged and patched him, nipped and snipped him,
And with *chapeau-bras* equipped him,
«*Belle Marquise!*»
Just to arm you through your wife-time,
And the languors of your lifetime,
«*Belle Marquise!*»
Say, to trim your toilet tapers
Or—to twist your hair in papers,
Or—to wean you from the vapors;—
As for these,
You are worth the love they give you,
Till a fairer face outlive you,
Or a younger grace shall please;
Till the coming of the crows'-feet,
And the backward turn of beaux' feet,
«*Belle Marquise!*»
Till your frothed-out life's commotion
Settles down to Ennui's ocean,
Or a dainty sham devotion,
«*Belle Marquise!*»

V

No: we neither like nor love you,
«*Belle Marquise!*»
Lesser lights we place above you,—
Milder merits better please.
We have passed from *Philosophe*-dom
Into plainer modern days,—
Grown contented in our oafdom,
Giving grace not all the praise;
And, *en partant, Arsinoé*,—
Without malice whatsoever,—
We shall counsel to our Chloë
To be rather good than clever;

For we find it hard to smother
Just one little thought, Marquise!
Wittier perhaps than any other,—
You were neither Wife nor Mother,
"*Belle Marquise!*"

A BALLAD TO QUEEN ELIZABETH

OF THE SPANISH ARMADA

KING PHILIP had vaunted his claims;
He had sworn for a year he would sack us;
With an army of heathenish names
He was coming to fagot and stack us;
Like the thieves of the sea he would track us,
And shatter our ships on the main;
But we had bold Neptune to back us,—
And where are the galleons of Spain?

His carackes were christened of dames
To the kirtles whereof he would tack us;
With his saints and his gilded stern-frames,
He had thought like an egg-shell to crack us;
Now Howard may get to his Flaccus,
And Drake to his Devon again,
And Hawkins bowl rubbers to Bacchus,—
For where are the galleons of Spain?

Let his Majesty hang to St. James
The axe that he whetted to hack us:
He must play at some lustier games.
Or at sea he can hope to out-thwack us;
To his mines of Peru he would pack us
To tug at his bullet and chain;
Alas! that his Greatness should lack us!—
But where are the galleons of Spain?

ENVOY

GLORIANA!—the Don may attack us
Whenever his stomach be fain;
He must reach us before he can rack us, . . .
And where are the galleons of Spain?

THE PRINCESS DE LAMBALLE

From ‹Four Frenchwomen›

A TENDER wife, a loving daughter, and a loyal friend,—shall we not here lay down upon the grave of Marie de Lamballe our reverential tribute, our little chaplet of *immortelles*, in the name of all good women, wives, and daughters?

«*Elle était mieux femme que les autres.*»* To us that apparently indefinite, exquisitely definite sentence most fitly marks the distinction between the subjects of the two preceding papers and the subject of the present. It is a transition from the stately figure of a marble Agrippina to the breathing, feeling woman at your side; it is the transition from the statuesque Rachelesque heroines of a David to the «small sweet idyl» of a Greuze. And, we confess it, we were not wholly at ease with those tragic, majestic figures. We shuddered at the dagger and the bowl which suited them so well. We marveled at their bloodless serenity, their superhuman self-sufficiency; inly we questioned if they breathed and felt. Or was their circulation a matter of machinery—a mere dead-beat escapement? We longed for the *sexe prononcé* of Rivarol—we longed for the showman's «female woman!» We respected and we studied, but we did not love them. With Madame de Lamballe the case is otherwise. Not grand like this one, not heroic like that one, «*elle est mieux femme que les autres.*»

She at least is woman—after a fairer fashion—after a truer type. Not intellectually strong like Manon Philipon, not Spartan-souled like Marie de Corday, she has still a rare intelligence, a courage of affection. She has that *clairvoyance* of the heart which supersedes all the stimulants of mottoes from Reynel or maxims from Rousseau; she has that «angel instinct» which is a juster lawgiver than Justinian. It was thought praise to say of the Girondist lady that she was a greater man than her husband; it is praise to say of this queen's friend that she was more woman than Madame Roland. Not so grand, not so great, we like the princess best. *Elle est mieux femme que les autres.*

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* She was more woman than the others.

MARY MAPES DODGE

(1840?–)

To write a story which in thirty years should pass through more than a hundred editions, which should attain the apotheosis of an *edition de luxe*, which should be translated into at least four foreign languages, be allotted the Montyon prize of 1500 francs for moral as well as literary excellence, and be crowned by the French Academy—this is a piece of good fortune which falls to the lot of few story-tellers. The book which has deserved so well is 'Hans Brinker, or The Silver Skates,' a story of life in Holland. Its author, born in New York, is a daughter of Professor James Jay Mapes, an eminent chemist and inventor, an accomplished writer and brilliant talker.

MARY MAPES DODGE

In a household where music, art, and literature were cultivated, and where the most agreeable society came, talents were not likely to be overlooked. Mrs. Dodge, very early widowed, began writing before she was twenty, publishing short stories, sketches, and poems in various periodicals. 'Hans Brinker' appeared in 1864,—her delight in Motley's histories and their appeal to her own Dutch blood inspiring her to write it. Of this book Mr. Frank R. Stockton says:—

«There are strong reasons why the fairest orange groves, the loftiest mountain peaks, or the inspiriting waves of the rolling sea, could not tempt average boys and girls from the level stretches of the Dutch canals, until they had skated through the sparkling story, warmed with a healthy glow.

«This is not only a tale of vivid description, interesting and instructive; it is a romance. There are adventures, startling and surprising, there are mysteries of buried gold, there are the machinations of the wicked, there is the heroism of the good, and the gay humor of happy souls. More than these, there is love—that sentiment which glides into a good story as naturally as into a human life; and whether the story be for old or young, this element gives it an ever-welcome charm. Strange fortune and good fortune come to Hans and to Gretel, and to many other deserving characters in the tale, but there is nothing selfish about these heroes and heroines. As soon as a new generation of young people grows up to be old enough to enjoy this perennial story, all these characters return to the days of their youth, and are ready to act their parts again to the very end, and to feel in their own souls, as everybody else feels, that their story is just as new and interesting as when it was first told.»

Besides this book, Mrs. Dodge has published several volumes of juvenile verse, such as ‹Rhymes and Jingles,› and ‹When Life was Young›; a volume of serious verse, ‹Along the Way›; a volume of satirical and humorous sketches, ‹Theophilus and Others›; a second successful story for young people, ‹Donald and Dorothy,› and a number of other works. Her stories evince an unusual faculty of construction and marked inventiveness, — inherited perhaps from her father,— truthful characterization, literary feeling, a strong sense of humor, and a high ethical standard. Her whimsical character sketch, ‹Miss Maloney on the Chinese Question,› which has been reprinted thousands of times and repeated by every elocutionist in the land, is in its way as searching a satire as Bret Harte's ‹Heathen Chinee.›

Since its beginning in 1873, Mrs. Dodge has edited the St. Nicholas Magazine, whose pages bear witness to her enormous industry.

THE RACE

From ‹Hans Brinker, or The Silver Skates.› Copyright 1896, by Charles Scribner's Sons

THE 20th of December came at last, bringing with it the perfection of winter weather. All over the level landscape lay the warm sunlight. It tried its power on lake, canal, and river; but the ice flashed defiance, and showed no sign of melting. The very weathercocks stood still to enjoy the sight. This gave the windmills a holiday. Nearly all the past week they had been whirling briskly; now, being rather out of breath, they rocked lazily in the clear still air. Catch a windmill working when the weathercocks have nothing to do!

There was an end to grinding, crushing, and sawing for that day. It was a good thing for the millers near Broek. Long before noon, they concluded to take in their sails and go to the race. Everybody would be there. Already the north side of the frozen Y was bordered with eager spectators; the news of the great skating-match had traveled far and wide. Men, women, and children, in holiday attire, were flocking toward the spot. Some wore furs and wintry cloaks or shawls; but many, consulting their feelings rather than the almanac, were dressed as for an October day.

The site selected for the race was a faultless plain of ice near Amsterdam, on that great *arm* of the Zuyder Zee, which Dutchmen of course must call the Eye. The townspeople turned out in large numbers. Strangers in the city deemed it a fine chance to see what was to be seen. Many a peasant from the northward had wisely chosen the 20th as the day for the next city-trading. It seemed that everybody, young and old, who had wheels, skates, or feet at command, had hastened to the scene.

There were the gentry in their coaches, dressed like Parisians fresh from the Boulevards; Amsterdam children in charity uniforms; girls from the Roman Catholic Orphan House, in sable gowns and white head-bands; boys from the Burgher Asylum, with their black tights and short-skirted harlequin coats. There were old-fashioned gentlemen in cocked hats and velvet knee-breeches; old-fashioned ladies too, in stiff quilted skirts and bodices of dazzling brocade. These were accompanied by servants bearing foot-stoves and cloaks. There were the peasant folk, arrayed in every possible Dutch costume,—shy young rustics in brazen buckles; simple village maidens concealing their flaxen hair under fillets of gold; women whose long narrow aprons were stiff with embroidery; women with short corkscrew curls hanging over their foreheads; women with shaved heads and close-fitting caps, and women in striped skirts and windmill bonnets; men in leather, in homespun, in velvet and broadcloth; burghers in modern European attire, and burghers in short jackets, wide trousers, and steeple-crowned hats.

There were beautiful Friesland girls in wooden shoes and coarse petticoats, with solid gold crescents encircling their heads, finished at each temple with a golden rosette, and hung with lace a century old. Some wore necklaces, pendants, and earrings of the purest gold. Many were content with gilt, or even with brass; but it is not an uncommon thing for a Friesland woman to have all the family treasure in her headgear. More than one rustic lass displayed the value of two thousand guilders upon her head that day.

Scattered throughout the crowd were peasants from the Island of Marken, with sabots, black stockings, and the widest of breeches; also women from Marken, with short blue petticoats, and black jackets gayly figured in front. They wore red sleeves, white aprons, and a cap like a bishop's mitre over their golden hair.

The children often were as quaint and odd-looking as their elders. In short, one-third of the crowd seemed to have stepped bodily from a collection of Dutch paintings.

Everywhere could be seen tall women and stumpy men, lively-faced girls, and youths whose expressions never changed from sunrise to sunset.

There seemed to be at least one specimen from every known town in Holland. There were Utrecht water-bearers, Gouda cheese-makers, Delft pottery-men, Schiedam distillers, Amsterdam diamond-cutters, Rotterdam merchants, dried-up herring-packers, and two sleepy-eyed shepherds from Texel. Every man of them had his pipe and tobacco pouch. Some carried what might be called the smoker's complete outfit,—a pipe, tobacco, a pricker with which to clean the tube, a silver net for protecting the bowl, and a box of the strongest of brimstone matches.

A true Dutchman, you must remember, is rarely without his pipe on any possible occasion. He may for a moment neglect to breathe; but when the pipe is forgotten, he must be dying indeed. There were no such sad cases here. Wreaths of smoke were rising from every possible quarter. The more fantastic the smoke-wreath, the more placid and solemn the smoker.

Look at those boys and girls on stilts! That is a good idea. They can look over the heads of the tallest. It is strange to see those little bodies high in the air, carried about on mysterious legs. They have such a resolute look on their round faces, what wonder that nervous old gentlemen with tender feet wince and tremble while the long-legged little monsters stride past them!

You will read in certain books that the Dutch are a quiet people. So they are, generally. But listen! did you ever hear such a din? All made up of human voices—no, the horses are helping somewhat, and the fiddles are squeaking pitifully; (how it must pain fiddles to be tuned!) but the mass of the sound comes from the great *vox humana* that belongs to a crowd.

That queer little dwarf, going about with a heavy basket, winding in and out among the people, helps not a little. You can hear his shrill cry above all other sounds, «Pypen en tabac! Pypen en tabac!»

Another, his big brother, though evidently some years younger, is selling doughnuts and bonbons. He is calling on all pretty children, far and near, to come quickly or the cakes will be gone.

You know quite a number among the spectators. High up in yonder pavilion, erected upon the border of the ice, are some persons whom you have seen very lately. In the centre is Madame Van Gleck. It is her birthday, you remember; she has the post of honor. There is Mynheer Van Gleck, whose meerschaum has not really grown fast to his lips; it only appears so. There are Grandfather and Grandmother, whom you met at the St. Nicholas fête. All the children are with them. It is so mild, they have brought even the baby. The poor little creature is swaddled very much after the manner of an Egyptian mummy; but it can crow with delight, and when the band is playing, open and shut its animated mittens in perfect time to the music.

Grandfather, with his pipe and spectacles and fur cap, makes quite a picture as he holds Baby upon his knee. Perched high upon their canopied platforms, the party can see all that is going on. No wonder the ladies look complacently at the glassy ice; with a stove for a footstool, one might sit cosily beside the North Pole.

There is a gentleman with them, who somewhat resembles St. Nicholas as he appeared to the young Van Glecks on the fifth of December. But the Saint had a flowing white beard, and this face is as smooth as a pippin. His Saintship was larger round the body too, and (between ourselves) he had a pair of thimbles in his mouth, which this gentleman certainly has not. It cannot be St. Nicholas, after all.

Near by in the next pavilion sit the Van Holps, with their son and daughter (the Van Gends) from The Hague. Peter's sister is not one to forget her promises. She has brought bouquets of exquisite hot-house flowers for the winners.

These pavilions,—and there are others beside,—have all been erected since daylight. That semicircular one, containing Mynheer Korbes's family, is very pretty, and proves that the Hollanders are quite skilled at tent-making; but I like the Van Glecks' best,—the centre one, striped red and white, and hung with evergreens.

The one with the blue flags contains the musicians. Those pagoda-like affairs, decked with sea-shells and streamers of every possible hue, are the judges' stands; and those columns and flagstaffs upon the ice mark the limit of the race-course. The two white columns twined with green, connected at the top by that long floating strip of drapery, form the starting-point. Those flagstaffs, half a mile off, stand at each end of the boundary line, cut sufficiently deep to be distinct to the skaters, though not deep enough to trip them when they turn to come back to the starting-point.

The air is so clear, it seems scarcely possible that the columns and flagstaffs are so far apart. Of course the judges' stands are but little nearer together. Half a mile on the ice, when the atmosphere is like this, is but a short distance after all, especially when fenced with a living chain of spectators.

The music has commenced. How melody seems to enjoy itself in the open air! The fiddles have forgotten their agony, and everything is harmonious. Until you look at the blue tent, it seems that the music springs from the sunshine, it is so boundless, so joyous. Only the musicians are solemn.

Where are the racers? All assembled together near the white columns. It is a beautiful sight,—forty boys and girls in picturesque attire, darting with electric swiftness in and out among each other, or sailing in pairs and triplets, beckoning, chatting, whispering, in the fullness of youthful glee.

A few careful ones are soberly tightening their straps; others, halting on one leg, with flushed eager faces, suddenly cross the suspected skate over their knee, give it an examining shake, and dart off again. One and all are possessed with the spirit of motion. They cannot stand still. Their skates are a part of them, and every runner seems bewitched.

Holland is the place for skaters, after all. Where else can nearly every boy and girl perform feats on the ice that would attract a crowd if seen on Central Park? Look at Ben! I did not see him before. He is really astonishing the natives; no easy thing to do in the Netherlands. Save your strength, Ben; you will need it soon. Now other boys are trying! Ben is surpassed already. Such jumping, such poising, such spinning, such india-rubber exploits generally! That boy with a red cap is the lion now; his back is a watch-spring, his body is cork—no, it is iron, or it would snap at that. He is a bird, a top, a rabbit, a corkscrew, a sprite, a flesh-ball, all in an instant. When you think he is erect, he is down; and when you think he is down, he is up. He drops his glove on the ice, and turns a somerset as he picks it up. Without stopping, he snatches the cap from

Jacob Poot's astonished head, and claps it back again «hind side before.» Lookers-on hurrah and laugh. Foolish boy! It is arctic weather under your feet, but more than temperate overhead. Big drops already are rolling down your forehead. Superb skater as you are, you may lose the race.

A French traveler, standing with a notebook in his hand, sees our English friend Ben buy a doughnut of the dwarf's brother, and eat it. Thereupon he writes in his note-book that the Dutch take enormous mouthfuls, and universally are fond of potatoes boiled in molasses.

There are some familiar faces near the white columns. Lambert, Ludwig, Peter, and Carl are all there, cool, and in good skating order. Hans is not far off. Evidently he is going to join in the race, for his skates are on,—the very pair that he sold for seven guilders. He had soon suspected that his fairy godmother was the mysterious «friend» who bought them. This settled, he had boldly charged her with the deed; and she, knowing well that all her little savings had been spent in the purchase, had not had the face to deny it. Through the fairy god-mother, too, he had been rendered amply able to buy them back again. Therefore Hans is to be in the race. Carl is more indignant than ever about it; but as three other peasant boys have entered, Hans is not alone.

Twenty boys and twenty girls. The latter by this time are standing in front, braced for the start; for they are to have the first «run.» Hilda, Rychie, and Katrinka are among them. Two or three bend hastily to give a last pull at their skate-straps. It is pretty to see them stamp, to be sure that all is firm. Hilda is speaking pleasantly to a graceful little creature in a red jacket and a new brown petticoat. Why, it is Gretel! What a difference those pretty shoes make; and the skirt and the new cap! Annie Bouman is there too. Even Janzoon Kolp's sister has been admitted; but Janzoon himself has been voted out by the directors because he killed the stork, and only last summer was caught in the act of robbing a bird's nest,—a legal offense in Holland.

This Janzoon Kolp, you see, was— There, I cannot tell the story just now. The race is about to commence.

Twenty girls are formed in a line. The music has ceased.

A man whom we shall call the crier stands between the columns and the first judges' stand. He reads the rules in a loud voice:—

"*The girls and boys are to race in turn, until one girl and one boy have beaten twice. They are to start in a line from the united columns, skate to the flagstaff line, turn, and then come back to the starting-point; thus making a mile at each run.*"

A flag is waved from the judges' stand. Madame Van Gleck rises in her pavilion. She leans forward with a white handkerchief in her hand. When she drops it, a bugler is to give the signal for them to start.

The handkerchief is fluttering to the ground. Hark!

They are off!

No. Back again. Their line was not true in passing the judges' stand.

The signal is repeated.

Off again. No mistake this time. Whew! how fast they go!

The multitude is quiet for an instant, absorbed in eager, breathless watching.

Cheers spring up along the line of spectators. Huzza! five girls are ahead. Who comes flying back from the boundary mark? We cannot tell. Something red, that is all. There is a blue spot flitting near it, and a dash of yellow nearer still. Spectators at this end of the line strain their eyes, and wish they had taken their post nearer the flagstaff.

The wave of cheers is coming back again. Now we can see. Katrinka is ahead!

She passes the Van Holp pavilion. The next is Madame Van Gleck's. That leaning figure gazing from it is a magnet. Hilda shoots past Katrinka, waving her hand to her mother as she passes. Two others are close now, whizzing on like arrows. What is that flash of red and gray? Hurrah, it is Gretel! She too waves her hand, but toward no gay pavilion. The crowd is cheering; but she hears only her father's voice, "Well done, little Gretel!" Soon Katrinka, with a quick merry laugh, shoots past Hilda. The girl in yellow is gaining now. She passes them all,—all except Gretel. The judges lean forward without seeming to lift their eyes from their watches. Cheer after cheer fills the air; the very columns seem rocking. Gretel has passed them. She has won.

"GRETEL BRINKER, ONE MILE!" shouts the crier.

The judges nod. They write something upon a tablet which each holds in his hand.

While the girls are resting,—some crowding eagerly around our frightened little Gretel, some standing aside in high disdain,—the boys form in a line.

Mynheer Van Gleck drops the handkerchief this time. The buglers give a vigorous blast. Off start the boys!

Half-way already. Did ever you see the like!

Three hundred legs flashing by in an instant. But there are only twenty boys. No matter; there were hundreds of legs, I am sure. Where are they now? There is such a noise one gets bewildered. What are the people laughing at? Oh! at that fat boy in the rear. See him go! See him! He'll be down in an instant; no, he won't. I wonder if he knows he is all alone: the other boys are nearly at the boundary line. Yes, he knows it. He stops. He wipes his hot face. He takes off his cap, and looks about him. Better to give up with a good grace. He has made a hundred friends by that hearty, astonished laugh. Good Jacob Poot!

The fine fellow is already among the spectators, gazing as eagerly as the rest.

A cloud of feathery ice flies from the heels of the skaters as they «bring to,» and turn at the flagstaffs.

Something black is coming now,—one of the boys; it is all we know. He has touched the *vox humana* stop of the crowd; it fairly roars. Now they come nearer; we can see the red cap. There's Ben, there's Peter, there's Hans!

Hans is ahead. Young Madame Van Gend almost crushes the flowers in her hand: she had been quite sure that Peter would be first. Carl Schummel is next, then Ben, and the youth with the red cap. The others are pressing close. A tall figure darts from among them. He passes the red cap, he passes Ben, then Carl. Now it is an even race between him and Hans. Madame Van Gend catches her breath.

It is Peter! He is ahead! Hans shoots past him. Hilda's eyes fill with tears: Peter *must* beat. Annie's eyes flash proudly. Gretel gazes with clasped hands: four strokes more will take her brother to the columns.

He is there! Yes; but so was young Schummel just a second before. At the last instant, Carl, gathering his powers, had whizzed between them, and passed the goal.

«CARL SCHUMMEL, ONE MILE!» shouts the crier.

Soon Madame Van Gleck rises again. The falling handkerchief starts the bugle, and the bugle, using its voice as a bowstring, shoots off twenty girls like so many arrows.

It is a beautiful sight; but one has not long to look: before we can fairly distinguish them they are far in the distance. This time they are close upon one another. It is hard to say, as they come speeding back from the flagstaff, which will reach the columns first. There are new faces among the foremost,—eager glowing faces, unnoticed before. Katrinka is there, and Hilda; but Gretel and Rychie are in the rear. Gretel is wavering, but when Rychie passes her she starts forward afresh. Now they are nearly beside Katrinka. Hilda is still in advance: she is almost «home.» She has not faltered since that bugle note sent her flying: like an arrow, still she is speeding toward the goal. Cheer after cheer rises in the air. Peter is silent, but his eyes shine like stars. «Huzza! Huzza!»

The crier's voice is heard again.

«HILDA VAN GLECK, ONE MILE!»

A loud murmur of approval runs through the crowd, catching the music in its course, till all seems one sound, with a glad rhythmic throbbing in its depths. When the flag waves all is still.

Once more the bugle blows a terrific blast. It sends off the boys like chaff before the wind,—dark chaff, I admit, and in big pieces.

It is whisked around at the flagstaff, driven faster yet by the cheers and shouts along the line. We begin to see what is coming. There are three boys in advance this time, and all abreast,—Hans, Peter, and Lambert. Carl soon breaks the ranks, rushing through with a whiff. Fly, Hans; fly, Peter; don't let Carl beat again!—Carl the bitter, Carl the insolent. Van Mounen is flagging, but you are as strong as ever.. Hans and Peter, Peter and Hans; which is foremost? We love them both. We scarcely care which is the fleeter.

Hilda, Annie, and Gretel, seated upon the long crimson bench, can remain quiet no longer. They spring to their feet, so different! and yet one in eagerness. Hilda instantly reseats herself: none shall know how interested she is; none shall know how anxious, how filled with one hope. Shut your eyes then, Hilda, hide your face rippling with joy. Peter has beaten.

"PETER VAN HOLP, ONE MILE!" calls the crier.

The same buzz of excitement as before, while the judges take notes, the same throbbing of music through the din; but something is different. A little crowd presses close about some object near the column. Carl has fallen. He is not hurt, though somewhat stunned. If he were less sullen, he would find more sympathy in these warm young hearts. As it is, they forget him as soon as he is fairly on his feet again.

The girls are to skate their third mile.

How resolute the little maidens look, as they stand in a line! Some are solemn with a sense of responsibility; some wear a smile, half bashful, half provoked; but one air of determination pervades them all.

This third mile may decide the race. Still, if neither Gretel nor Hilda win, there is yet a chance among the rest for the silver skates.

Each girl feels sure that this time she will accomplish the distance in one-half the time. How they stamp to try their runners! How nervously they examine each strap! How erect they stand at last, every eye upon Madame Van Gleck!

The bugle thrills through them again. With quivering eagerness they spring forward, bending, but in perfect balance. Each flashing stroke seems longer than the last.

Now they are skimming off in the distance.

Again the eager straining of eyes; again the shouts and cheering; again the thrill of excitement, as after a few moments, four or five in advance of the rest come speeding back, nearer, nearer to the white columns.

Who is first? Not Rychie, Katrinka, Annie, nor Hilda, nor the girl in yellow, but Gretel,— Gretel, the fleetest sprite of a girl that ever skated. She was but playing in the earlier race: *now* she is in earnest, or rather, something within her has determined to win. That blithe little form makes no effort; but it cannot stop,— not until the goal is passed!

In vain the crier lifts his voice: he cannot be heard. He has no news to tell: it is already ringing through the crowd,— *Gretel has won the silver skates!*

Like a bird she has flown over the ice; like a bird she looks about her in a timid, startled way. She longs to dart to the sheltered nook where her father and mother stand. But Hans is beside her; the girls are crowding round. Hilda's kind, joyous voice breathes in her ear. From that hour none will despise her. Goose-girl or not, Gretel stands acknowledged Queen of the Skaters.

With natural pride, Hans turns to see if Peter Van Holp is witnessing his sister's triumph. Peter is not looking toward them at all. He is kneeling, bending his troubled face low, and working hastily at his skate-strap. Hans is beside him at once.

«Are you in trouble, mynheer?»

«Ah, Hans! that you? Yes; my fun is over. I tried to tighten my strap to make a new hole, and this botheration of a knife has cut it nearly in two.»

«Mynheer,» said Hans, at the same time pulling off a skate, «you must use my strap!»

«Not I, indeed, Hans Brinker!» cried Peter, looking up; «though I thank you warmly. Go to your post, my friend: the bugle will sound in a minute.»

«Mynheer,» pleaded Hans in a husky voice, «you have called me your friend. Take this strap—quick! There is not an instant to lose. I shall not skate this time: indeed, I am out of practice. Mynheer, you *must* take it;» and Hans, blind and deaf to any remonstrance, slipped his strap into Peter's skate, and implored him to put it on.

«Come, Peter!» cried Lambert from the line: «we are waiting for you.»

«For Madame's sake,» pleaded Hans, «be quick! She is motioning to you to join the racers. There, the skate is almost on: quick, mynheer, fasten it. I could not possibly win. The race lies between Master Schummel and yourself.»

«You are a noble fellow, Hans!» cried Peter, yielding at last. He sprang to his post just as the handkerchief fell to the ground. The bugle sends forth its blast, loud, clear, and ringing.

Off go the boys!

«Mein Gott!» cries a tough old fellow from Delft. «They beat everything, these Amsterdam youngsters. See them!»

See them, indeed! They are winged Mercuries, every one of them. What mad errand are they on? Ah, I know; they are hunting Peter Van Holp. He is some fleet-footed runaway from Olympus. Mercury and his troop of winged cousins are in full chase. They will catch him! Now Carl is the runaway. The pursuit grows furious. Ben is foremost!

The chase turns in a cloud of mist. It is coming this way. Who is hunted now? Mercury himself. It is Peter, Peter Van Holp! Fly, Peter! Hans is watching you. He is sending all his fleetness, all his strength, into your feet. Your mother and sister are pale with eagerness. Hilda is trembling, and dare not look up. Fly, Peter! The crowd has not gone deranged; it is only cheering. The pursuers are close upon you. Touch the white column! It beckons; it is reeling before you—it—

«Huzza! Huzza! Peter has won the silver skates!»

«PETER VAN HOLP!» shouted the crier. But who heard him? «Peter Van Holp!» shouted a hundred voices; for he was the favorite boy of the place. «Huzza! Huzza!»

Now the music was resolved to be heard. It struck up a lively air, then a tremendous march. The spectators, thinking something new was about to happen, deigned to listen and to look.

The racers formed in single file. Peter, being tallest, stood first. Gretel, the smallest of all, took her place at the end. Hans, who had borrowed a strap from the cake-boy, was near the head.

Three gayly twined arches were placed at intervals upon the river, facing the Van Gleck pavilion.

Skating slowly, and in perfect time to the music, the boys and girls moved forward, led on by Peter. It was beautiful to see the bright procession glide along like a living creature. It curved and doubled, and drew its graceful length in and out among the arches; whichever way Peter, the head, went, the body was sure to follow. Sometimes it steered direct for the centre arch; then, as if seized with a new impulse, turned away and curled itself about the first one; then unwound slowly, and bending low, with quick snake-like curvings, crossed the river, passing at length through the farthest arch.

When the music was slow, the procession seemed to crawl like a thing afraid; it grew livelier, and the creature darted forward with a spring, gliding rapidly among the arches, in and out, curling, twisting, turning, never losing form, until at the shrill call of the bugle rising above the music it suddenly resolved itself into boys and girls, standing in double semicircle before Madame Van Gleck's pavilion.

Peter and Gretel stand in the centre, in advance of the others. Madame Van Gleck rises majestically. Gretel trembles, but feels that she must look at the beautiful lady. She cannot hear what is said, there is such a buzzing all around her. She is thinking that she ought to try and make a courtesy, such as her mother makes to the *meester*, when suddenly something so dazzling is placed in her hand that she gives a cry of joy.

Then she ventures to look about her. Peter too has something in his hands. «Oh, oh! how splendid!» she cries; and «Oh! how splendid!» is echoed as far as people can see.

Meantime the silver skates flash in the sunshine, throwing dashes of light upon those two happy faces.

«Mevrouw Van Gend sends a little messenger with her bouquets,— one for Hilda, one for Carl, and others for Peter and Gretel.»

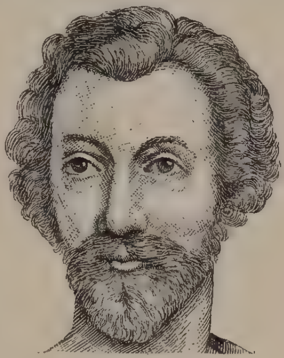
At sight of the flowers, the Queen of the Skaters becomes uncontrollable. With a bright stare of gratitude, she gathers skates and bouquet in her apron, hugs them to her bosom, and darts off to search for her father and mother in the scattering crowd.

JOHN DONNE

(1573–1631)

"The memory of Dr. Donne must not, cannot die, as long as men speak English," wrote Izaak Walton, "whilst his conversation made him and others happy. His life ought to be the example of more than that age in which he died."

Born in 1573, all the influences of the age in which Donne lived nourished his large nature and genius. Shakespeare and Marlowe were nine years older than he; Chapman fourteen; Spenser, Lyly, and Richard Hooker each twenty; while Sir Philip Sidney counted one year less. Lodge and Puttenham were grown men, and Greene and Nash riotous boys. In the following year Ben Jonson "came forth to warm our ears," and soon after we have his future co-worker Inigo Jones. It was the time of a multitude of poets,—Drayton, the Fletchers, Beaumont, Wither, Herrick, Carew, Suckling, and others. Imagination was foremost, and was stimulated by vast discoveries. Debates upon ecclesiastical reform, led by Wyclif, Tyndal, Knox, Foxe, Sternhold, Hopkins, and others, had prepared the way; and the luminous literatures of Greece and Italy, but recently brought into England, had made men's spirits receptive and creative. It was a period of vast conceptions, when men discovered themselves and the world afresh.



John Donne

Under such outward conditions Donne was born, in London, "of good and virtuous parents," says Walton, being descended on his mother's side from no less distinguished a personage than Sir Thomas More. In 1584, when he was eleven years old, with a good command both of French and Latin, he passed from the hands of tutors at home to Hare Hall, a much frequented college at Oxford. Here he formed a friendship with Henry Wotton, who, after the poet's death, collected the material from which Walton wrote his tender and sincere 'Life of Donne.'

After leaving Oxford he traveled for three years on the Continent, and on his return in 1572 became a member of Lincoln's Inn, with intent to study law; but his law never, says Walton, "served him for other use than an ornament and self-satisfaction.» While a member of Lincoln's Inn he became one of the coterie of the poets of his youth. To this time are to be referred those of his ‹Divine Poems› which show him a sincere Catholic. Stirred by the increasing differences between the Romanist and the Anglican denominations, Donne turned toward theological questions, and finally cast his lot with the new doctrines. His large nature, impetuously reacting from the asceticism to which he had been bred, turned to excess and overboldness in action, and an occasional coarseness of phrasing in his poems.

The first of his famous ‹Satires› are dated 1593, and all were probably written before 1601. During this time also he squandered his father's legacy of £3000. In 1596, when the Earl of Essex defeated the Spanish navy and pillaged Cadiz, Donne, now one of the first poets of the time, was among his followers. «Not long after his return into England . . . the Lord Ellesmere, the Keeper of the Great Seal, . . . taking notice of his learning, languages, and other abilities, and much affecting his person and behavior, took him to be his chief secretary, supposing and intending it to be an introduction to some weighty employment in the State; . . . and did always use him with much courtesy, appointing him a place at his own table.» Here he met the niece of Lady Ellesmere, — the daughter of Sir George More, Lord Lieutenant of the Tower,— whom at Christmas, 1600, he married, despite the opposition of her father. Sir George, transported with wrath, obtained Donne's imprisonment; but the poet finally regained his liberty and his wife, Sir George in the end forgiving the young couple. «Mr. Donne's estate was the greatest part spent in many chargeable travels, books, and dear-bought experience; he [being] out of all employment that might yield a support for himself and wife.» The depth and intensity of Donne's feeling for this beautiful and accomplished woman are manifested, says Mr. Norton, in all the poems known to be addressed to her, such as ‹The Anniversary› and ‹The Token.›

Of ‹The Valediction Forbidding Mourning› Walton declares:—«I beg leave to tell that I have heard some critics, learned both in languages and poetry, say that none of the Greek or Latin poets did ever equal them;» while from Lowell's unpublished ‹Lecture on Poetic Diction› Professor Norton quotes the opinion that «This poem is a truly sacred one, and fuller of the soul of poetry than a whole Alexandrian Library of common love verses.»

During this period of writing for court favors, Donne wrote many of his sonnets and studied the civil and canon law. After the death of his patron Sir Francis in 1606, Donne divided his time between Mitcham, whither he had removed his family, and London, where he frequented distinguished and fashionable drawing-rooms. At this time he wrote his admirable epistles in verse, ‹The Litany,› and funeral elegies on Lady Markham and Mistress Bulstrode; but those poems are merely «occasional,» as he was not a poet by profession. At the request of King James he wrote the ‹Pseudo-Martyr,› published in 1610. In 1611 appeared his funeral elegy ‹An Anatomy of the World,› and one year later another of like texture, ‹On the Progress of the Soul,› both poems being exalted and elaborate in thought and fancy.

The King, desiring Donne to enter into the ministry, denied all requests for secular preferment, and the unwilling poet deferred his decision for almost three years. All that time he studied textual divinity, Greek, and Hebrew. He was ordained about the beginning of 1615. The King made him his chaplain in ordinary, and promised other preferments. «Now,» says Walton, «the English Church had gained a second St. Austin, for I think none was so like him before his conversion, none so like St. Ambrose after it; and if his youth had the infirmities of the one, his age had the excellences of the other, the learning and holiness of both.»

In 1621 the King made him Dean of St. Paul's, and vicar of St. Dunstan in the West. By these and other ecclesiastical emoluments «he was enabled to become charitable to the poor and kind to his friends, and to make such provision for his children that they were not left scandalous, as relating to their or his profession or quality.»

His first printed sermons appeared in 1622. The epigrammatic terseness and unexpected turns of imagination which characterize the poems, are found also in his discourses. Three years later, during a dangerous illness, he composed his ‹Devotion.› He died on the 31st of March, 1631.

«Donne is full of salient verses,» says Lowell in his ‹Shakespeare Once More,› «that would take the rudest March winds of criticism with their beauty; of thoughts that first tease us like charades, and then delight us with the felicity of their solution.» There are few in which an occasional loftiness is sustained throughout, but this occasional excellence is original, condensed, witty, showing a firm and strong mind, clear to a degree almost un-English. His poetry has somewhat of the stability of the Greeks, though it may lack their sweetness and art. His grossness was the heritage of his time. He is classed among the «metaphysical poets,» of whom Dr. Johnson wrote:—«They were of very little care to clothe their notions with elegance of dress, and therefore miss the notice and the praise which are often gained by those who think less, but are more diligent to adorn their thoughts.» It was in obedience to such a dictum, and to Dryden's suggestion, doubtless, that Pope and Parnell recast and re-versified the ‹Satires.›

The first edition of Donne's poems appeared two years after his death. Several editions succeeded during the seventeenth century. In the more artificial eighteenth century his harsh and abrupt versification and remote theorems made him difficult to understand. The best editions are ‹The Complete Poems of John Donne,› edited by Dr. Alexander Grosart (1872); and ‹The Poems of John Donne,› from the text of the edition of 1633, edited by Charles Eliot Norton (1895), from whose work the citations in this volume are taken.

THE UNDERTAKING

I HAVE done one braver thing
 Than all the Worthies did,
And yet a braver thence doth spring,
 Which is, to keep that hid.

It were but madness now t' impart
 The skill of specular stone,
When he which can have learned the art
 To cut it, can find none.

So, if I now should utter this,
 Others (because no more
Such stuff to work upon there is)
 Would love but as before:

But he who loveliness within
 Hath found, all outward loathes;
For he who color loves, and skin,
 Loves but their oldest clothes.

If, as I have, you also do
 Virtue attired in women see,
And dare love that and say so too,
 And forget the He and She;

And if this love, though placèd so,
 From profane men you hide,
Which will no faith on this bestow,
 Or, if they do, deride;

Then you have done a braver thing
 Than all the Worthies did,
And a braver thence will spring,
 Which is, to keep that hid.

A VALEDICTION FORBIDDING MOURNING

As virtuous men pass mildly away,
And whisper to their souls to go,
Whilst some of their sad friends do say,
« The breath goes now,» and some say « No »;

So let us melt and make no noise,
No tear-floods nor sigh-tempests move;
'Twere profanation of our joys
To tell the laity our love.

Moving of th' earth brings harms and fears;
Men reckon what it did and meant;
But trepidation of the spheres,
Though greater far, is innocent.

Dull sublunary lovers' love
(Whose soul is sense) cannot admit
Absence, because it doth remove
Those things which elemented it.

But we by a love so much refined
That ourselves know not what it is,
Inter-assurèd of the mind,
Care less eyes, lips, hands to miss.

Our two souls, therefore, which are one,
Though I must go, endure not yet
A breach, but an expansiòn,
Like gold to airy thinness beat.

If they be two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two;
Thy soul, the fixt foot, makes no show
To move, but doth if the other do,

And though it in the centre sit,
Yet when the other far doth roam,
It leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect as that comes home.

Such wilt thou be to me, who must,
Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness makes my circle just,
And makes me end where I begun.

SONG

Go and catch a falling star,
Get with child a mandrake root,
Tell me where all past years are,
Or who cleft the devil's foot,
Teach me to hear mermaids singing,
Or to keep off envy's stinging,
And find
What wind
Serves to advance an honest mind.

If thou be'st born to strange sights,
Things invisible to see,
Ride ten thousand days and nights,
Till age snow white hairs on thee,
Then, when thou return'st, wilt tell me
All strange wonders that befell thee,
And swear,
Nowhere
Lives a woman true and fair.

If thou find'st one, let me know;
Such a pilgrimage were sweet;
Yet do not: I would not go,
Though at next door we might meet;
Though she were true when you met her,
And last till you write your letter,
Yet she
Will be
False, ere I come, to two or three.

LOVE'S GROWTH

I scarce believe my love to be so pure
As I had thought it was,
Because it doth endure
Vicissitude and season as the grass;
Methinks I lied all winter, when I swore
My love was infinite, if spring make it more.
But if this medicine love, which cures all sorrow
With more, not only be no quintessence
But mixed of all stuffs paining soul or sense,
And of the sun his working vigor borrow,

Love's not so pure and abstract as they use
To say, which have no mistress but their muse,
But as all else, being elemented too,
Love sometimes would contemplate, sometimes do.

And yet no greater, but more eminent,
Love by the spring is grown;
As in the firmament
Stars by the sun are not enlarged, but shown,
Gentle love-deeds, as blossoms on a bough,
From love's awakened root do bud out now.
If, as in water stirred, more circles be
Produced by one, love such additions take,
Thou, like so many spheres, but one heaven make,
For they are all concentric unto thee;
And though each spring do add to love new heat,
As princes do in times of action get
New taxes and remit them not in peace,
No winter shall abate the spring's increase.

SONG

Sweetest Love, I do not go
For weariness of thee,
Nor in hope the world can show
A fitter Love for me:
But since that I
Must die at last, 'tis best
To use myself in jest
Thus by feigned deaths to die.

Yesternight the sun went hence,
And yet is here to-day;
He hath no desire nor sense,
Nor half so short a way.
Then fear not me,
But believe that I shall make
Speedier journeys, since I take
More wings and spurs than he.

Oh, how feeble is man's power,
That, if good fortune fall,
Cannot add another hour,
Nor a lost hour recall!

But come bad chance,
And we join to it our strength,
And we teach it art and length,
Itself o'er us to advance.

When thou sigh'st, thou sigh'st not wind,
But sigh'st my soul away;
When thou weep'st, unkindly kind,
My life's blood doth decay.
It cannot be
That thou lov'st me as thou say'st,
If in thine my life thou waste;
Thou art the best of me.

Let not thy divining heart
Forethink me any ill;
Destiny may take thy part,
And may thy fears fulfill:
But think that we
Are but turned aside to sleep:
They who one another keep
Alive, ne'er parted be.

FEODOR MIKHAILOVITCH DOSTOÉVSKY

(1821–1881)

BY ISABEL F. HAPGOOD

In certain respects Dostoévsky is the most characteristically national of Russian writers. Precisely for that reason, his work does not appeal to so wide a circle outside of his own country as does the work of Turgénieff and Count L. N. Tolstoy. This result flows not only from the natural bent of his mind and temperament, but also from the peculiar vicissitudes of his life as compared with the comparatively even tenor of their existence, and the circumstances of the time in which he lived. These circumstances, it is true, were felt by the writers mentioned; but practically they affected him far more deeply than they did the others, with their rather one-sided training; and his fellow-countrymen — especially the young of both sexes — were not slow to express their appreciation of the fact. His special domain was the one which Turgénieff and Tolstoy did not understand, and have touched not at all, or only incidentally,— the great middle class of society, or what corresponds thereto in Russia.

Feodor Dostoévsky

Through his father, Mikhail Andréevitch Dostoévsky, Feodor Mikhailovitch belonged to the class of «nobles,» — that is to say, to the gentry; through his mother, to the respectable, well-to-do merchant class, which is still distinct from the other, and was even more so during the first half of the present century; and in personal appearance he was a typical member of the peasant class. The father was resident physician in the Marie Hospital for the Poor in Moscow, having entered the civil service at the end of the war of 1812, during which he had served as a physician in the army. In the very contracted apartment which he occupied in the hospital, Feodor was born — one of a family of seven children, all of whom, with the exception of the eldest and the youngest, were born there — on October 30th (November 11th), 1821. The parents were very upright, well-educated, devoutly religious people; and as Feodor expressed it many years later to his elder brother, after their father died, «Do you know, our parents were very superior people, and they would have been superior even in these days.» The children were brought up at home as long as possible, and received their instruction from tutors and their father. Even after the necessity of preparing the two elder boys for a government institution forced the parents to send them to a boarding-school during the week, they continued their strict supervision over their associates, discouraged nearly all friendships with their comrades, and never allowed them to go into the street unaccompanied, after the national custom in good families, even at the age of seventeen or more.

Feodor, according to the account of his brothers and relatives, was always a quiet, studious lad, and he with his elder brother Mikhail spent their weekly holidays chiefly in reading, Walter Scott and James Fenimore Cooper being among their favorite authors; though Russian writers, especially Pushkin, were not neglected. During many of these years the mother and children passed the summers on a little estate in the country which the father bought, and it was there that Feodor Mikhailovitch first made acquaintance with the beauties of nature, to which he eloquently refers in after life, and especially with the peasants, their feelings and temper, which greatly helped him in his psychological studies and in his ability to endure certain trials which came upon him. There can be no doubt that his whole training contributed not only to the literary tastes which the famous author and his brother cherished throughout their lives, but to the formation of that friendship between them which was stronger than all others, and to the sincere belief in religion and the profound piety which permeated the spirit and the books of Feodor Mikhailovitch.

In 1837 the mother died, and the father took his two eldest sons to St. Petersburg to enter them in the government School of Engineers. But the healthy Mikhail was pronounced consumptive by the doctor, while the sickly Feodor was given a certificate of perfect health. Consequently Mikhail was rejected, and went to the Engineers' School in Revel, while Feodor, always quiet and reserved, was left lonely in the St. Petersburg school. Here he remained for three years, studying well, but devoting a great deal of time to his passionately beloved literary subjects, and developing a precocious and penetrating critical judgment on such matters. It is even affirmed that he began or wrote the first draft of his famous book ‹Poor People,› by night, during this period; though in another account he places its composition later. After graduating well as ensign in 1841, he studied for another year, and became an officer with the rank of sub-lieutenant, and entered on active service, attached to the draughting department of the Engineers' School, in August 1843.

A little more than a year later he resigned from the service, in order that he might devote himself wholly to literature. His father had died in the mean time, and had he possessed any practical talent he might have lived in comfort on the sums which his guardian sent him. But throughout his life people seemed to fleece him at will; he lost large sums at billiards with strangers, and otherwise; he was generous and careless; in short, he was to the end nearly always in debt, anxiety, and difficulties. Then came the first important crisis in his life. He wrote (or re-wrote) ‹Poor People›; and said of his state of mind, as he reckoned up the possible pecuniary results, that he could not sleep for nights together, and «If my undertaking does not succeed, perhaps I shall hang myself.» The history of that success is famous and stirring. His only acquaintance in literary circles was his old comrade D. V. Grigorovitch (also well known as a writer), and to him he committed the manuscript. His friend took it to the poet and editor Nekrásoff, in the hope that it might appear in the ‹Collection› which the latter was intending to publish. Dostoévsky was especially afraid of the noted critic Byelinsky's judgment on it: «He will laugh at my ‹Poor People,› said he; «but I wrote it with passion, almost with tears.»

He spent the evening with a friend, reading with him, as was the fashion of the time, Gogol's ‹Dead Souls,› and returned home at four o'clock in the morning. It was one of the «white nights» of early summer, and he sat down by his window. Suddenly the door-bell rang, and in rushed Grigorovitch and Nekrásoff, who flung themselves upon his neck. They had begun to read his story in the evening, remarking that «ten pages would suffice to show its quality.» But they had gone on reading, relieving each other as their voices failed them with fatigue and emotion, until the whole was finished. At the point where Pokrovsky's old father runs after his coffin, Nekrásoff pounded the table with the manuscript, deeply affected, and exclaimed, «Deuce take him!» Then they decide to hasten to Dostoévsky: «No matter if he is asleep — we will wake him up. *This* is above sleep.»

This sort of glory and success was exactly of that pure, unmixed sort which Dostoévsky had longed for. When Nekrásoff went to Byelinsky with the manuscript of ‹Poor People,› and announced, «A new Gogol has made his appearance!» the critic retorted with severity, «Gogols spring up like mushrooms among us.» But when he had read the story he said, «Bring him hither, bring him quickly;» and welcomed Dostoévsky when he came, with extreme dignity and reserve, but exclaimed in a moment, «Do you understand yourself what sort of a thing this is that you have written?» From that moment the young author's fame was assured, and he became known and popular even in advance of publication in a wide circle of literary and other people, as was the fashion of those days in Russia. When the story appeared, the public rapturously echoed the judgment of the critics.

The close friendship which sprang up between Byelinsky and Dostoévsky was destined, however, to exert an extraordinary influence upon Dostoévsky's career, quite apart from its critical aspect. Byelinsky was an atheist and a socialist, and Dostoévsky was brought into relations with persons who shared those views, although he himself never wavered, apparently, in his religious faith, and was never in harmony with any other aspirations of his associates except that of freeing the serfs. Notwithstanding this, he became involved in the catastrophe which overtook many visitors, occasional or constant, of the «circles» at whose head stood Petrashevsky. The whole affair is known as the Conspiracy of Petrashevsky. During the '40's the students at the St. Petersburg University formed small gatherings where sociological subjects were the objects of study, and read the works of Stein, Haxthausen, Louis Blanc, Fourier, Proudhon, and other similar writers. Gradually assemblies of this sort were formed outside of the University. Petrashevsky, an employee of the Department of Foreign Affairs, who had graduated from the Lyceum and the University, and who was ambitious of winning power and a reputation for eccentricity, learned of these little clubs and encouraged their growth. He did not however encourage their close association among themselves, but rather, entire dependence on himself, as the centre of authority, the guide; and urged them to inaugurate a sort of propaganda. Dostoévsky himself declared, about thirty years later, that «the socialists sprang from the followers of Petrashevsky; they sowed much seed.» He has dealt with them and their methods in his novel ‘Demons’; though perhaps not with exact accuracy. But they helped him to an elucidation of the contemporary situation, which Turgénieff had treated in ‘Virgin Soil.’ The chief subject of their political discussions was the emancipation of the serfs, and many of Petrashevsky's followers reckoned upon a rising of the serfs themselves, though it was proved that Dostoévsky maintained the propriety and necessity of the reform proceeding from the government. This was no new topic; the Emperor Nicholas I. had already begun to plan the Emancipation, and it is probable that it would have taken place long before it did, had it not been for this very conspiracy. From the point of view of the government, the movement was naturally dangerous, especially in view of what was taking place in Europe at that epoch. Dostoévsky bore himself critically toward the socialistic writings and doctrines, maintaining that in their own Russian system of workingmen's guilds with reciprocal bonds there existed surer and more normal foundations than in all the dreams of Saint-Simon and all his school. He did not even visit very frequently the circle to which he particularly belonged, and was rarely at the house of Petrashevsky, whom many personally disliked.

But on one occasion, as he was a good reader, he was asked to read aloud Byelinsky's famous letter to Gogol, which was regarded as a victorious manifest of «Western» (*i. e.*, of socialistic) views. This, technically, was propagating revolution, and was the chief charge against him when the catastrophe happened, and he, together with over thirty other «Petrashevtzi,» was arrested on April 23d (May 5th), 1849. In the Peter-Paul Fortress prison, where he was kept for eight months pending trial, Dostoévsky wrote ‹The Little Hero,› two or three unimportant works having appeared since ‹Poor People.› At last he, with several others, was condemned to death and led out for execution. The history of that day, and the analysis of his sensations and emotions, are to be found in several of his books: ‹Crime and Punishment,› ‹The Idiot,› ‹The Karamazoff Brothers.› At the last moment it was announced to them that the Emperor had commuted their sentence to exile in varying degrees, and they were taken to Siberia. Alexei Pleshtcheeff, then twenty-three years of age, the man who sent Byelinsky's letter to Dostoévsky, was banished for a short term of years to the disciplinary brigade in Orenburg; and when I saw him in St. Petersburg forty years later, I was able to form a faint idea of what Dostoévsky's popularity must have been, by the way in which he,—a man of much less talent, originality, and personal power,—was surrounded, even in church, by adoring throngs of young people. Dostoévsky's sentence was «four years at forced labor in prison; after that, to serve as a common soldier»; but he did not lose his nobility and his civil rights, being the first noble to retain them under such circumstances.

The story of what he did and suffered during his imprisonment is to be found in his ‹Notes from the House of the Dead,› where, under the disguise of a man sentenced to ten years' labor for the murder of his wife, he gives us a startling, faithful, but in some respects a consoling picture of life in a Siberian prison. His own judgment as to his exile was, «The government only defended itself;» and when people said to him, «How unjust your exile was!» he replied, even with irritation, «No, it was just. The people themselves would have condemned us.» Moreover, he did not like to give benefit readings in later years from his ‹Notes from the House of the Dead,› lest he might be thought to complain. Besides, this catastrophe was the making of him, by his own confession; he had become a confirmed hypochondriac, with a host of imaginary afflictions and ills, and had this affair not saved him from himself he said that he «should have gone mad.» It seems certain, from the testimony of his friend and physician, that he was already subject to the epileptic fits which he himself was wont to attribute to his imprisonment; and which certainly increased in severity as the years went on, until they occurred once a month or oftener, in consequence of overwork and excessive nervous strain. In his novel ‘The Idiot,’ whose hero is an epileptic, he has made a psychological study of his sensations before and after such fits, and elsewhere he makes allusions to them.

After serving in the ranks and being promoted officer when he had finished his term of imprisonment, he returned to Russia in 1859, and lived first at Tver; afterward, when permitted, in St. Petersburg. The history of his first marriage — which took place in Siberia, to the widow of a friend — is told with tolerable accuracy in his ‘Humbled and Insulted,’ which also contains a description of his early struggles and the composition of ‘Poor People,’ the hero who narrates the tale of his love and sacrifice being himself. Like that hero, he tried to facilitate his future wife's marriage to another man. He was married to his second wife, by whom he had four children, in 1867, and to her he owed much happiness and material comfort. It will be seen that much is to be learned concerning our author from his own novels, though it would hardly be safe to write a biography from them alone. Even in ‘Crime and Punishment,’ his greatest work in a general way, he reproduces events of his own life, meditations, wonderfully accurate descriptions of the third-rate quarter of the town in which he lived after his return from Siberia, while engaged on some of his numerous newspaper and magazine enterprises.

This journalistic turn of mind, combined in nearly equal measures with the literary talent, produced several singular effects. It rendered his periodical ‘Diary of a Writer’ the most enormously popular publication of the day, and a success when previous ventures had failed, though it consisted entirely of his own views on current topics of interest, literary questions, and whatever came into his head. On his novels it had a rather disintegrating effect. Most of them are of great length, are full of digressions from the point, and there is often a lack of finish about them which extends not only to the minor characters but to the style in general. In fact, his style is neither jewel-like in its brilliancy, as is Turgénieff's, nor has it the elegance, broken by carelessness, of Tolstoy's. But it was popular, remarkably well adapted to the class of society which it was his province to depict, and though diffuse, it is not possible to omit any of the long psychological analyses, or dreams, or series of ratiocinations, without injuring the web of the story and the moral, as chain armor is spoiled by the rupture of a link. This indeed is one of the great difficulties which the foreigner encounters in an attempt to study Dostoévsky: the translators have been daunted by his prolixity, and have often cut his works down to a mere skeleton of the original. Moreover, he deals with a sort of Russian society which it is hard for non-Russians to grasp, and he has no skill whatever in presenting aristocratic people or society, to which foreigners have become accustomed in the works of his great contemporaries Turgénieff and Tolstoy; while he never, despite all his genuine admiration for the peasants and keen sympathy with them, attempts any purely peasant tales like Turgénieff's ‹Notes of a Sportsman› or Tolstoy's ‹Tales for the People.› Naturally, this is but one reason the more why he should be studied. His types of hero, and of feminine character, are peculiar to himself. Perhaps the best way to arrive at his ideal — and at his own character, *plus* a certain irritability and tendency to suspicion of which his friends speak — is to scrutinize the pictures of Prince Myshkin (‹The Idiot›), Ivan (‹Humbled and Insulted›), and Alyosha (‹The Karamazoff Brothers›). Pure, delicate both physically and morally, as Dostoévsky himself is described by those who knew him best; devout, gentle, intensely sympathetic, strongly masculine yet with a large admixture of the feminine element — such are these three; such is also, in his way, Raskolnikoff (‹Crime and Punishment›). His feminine characters are the precise counterparts of these in many respects, but are often also quixotic even to boldness and wrong-headedness, like Aglaya (‹The Idiot›), or to shame, like Sonia (‹Crime and Punishment›), and the heroine of ‹Humbled and Insulted.› But Dostoévsky could not sympathize with and consequently could not draw an aristocrat; his frequently recurring type of the dissolute petty noble or rich merchant is frequently brutal; and his unclassed women, though possibly quite as true to life as these men, are painful in their callousness and recklessness. His earliest work, ‹Poor People,› written in the form of letters, is worthy of all the praises which have been bestowed upon it, simple as is the story of the poverty-stricken clerk who is almost too humble to draw his breath; who pleads that one must wear a coat and boots which do not show the bare feet, during the severe Russian winter, merely because public opinion forces one thereto; and who shares his rare pence with a distant but equally needy relative who is in a difficult position. As a compact, subtle psychological study, his ‹Crime and Punishment› cannot be overrated, repulsive as it is in parts. The poor student who kills the aged usurer with intent to rob, after prolonged argument with himself that great geniuses, like Napoleon I. and the like, are justified in committing any crime, and that he has a right to relieve his poverty; and who eventually surrenders himself to the authorities and accepts his exile as moral salvation,— is one of the strongest in Russian literature, though wrong-headed and easily swayed, like all the author's characters.

In June 1880 Dostoévsky made a speech at the unveiling of Pushkin's monument in Moscow, which completely overshadowed the speeches of Turgénieff and Aksakoff, and gave rise to what was probably the most extraordinary literary ovation ever seen in Russia. By that time he had become the object of pilgrimages, on the part of the young especially, to a degree which no other Russian author has ever experienced, and the recipient of confidences, both personal and written, which pressed heavily on his time and strength. That ovation has never been surpassed, save by the astonishing concourse at his funeral. He died of a lesion of the brain on January 28th (February 8th), 1881. Thousands followed his coffin for miles, but there was no «demonstration,» as that word is understood in Russia. Nevertheless it was a demonstration in an unexpected way, since all classes of society, even those which had not seemed closely interested or sympathetic, now joined in the tribute of respect, which amounted to loving enthusiasm.

The works which I have mentioned are the most important, though he wrote also 'The Stripling' and numerous shorter stories. His own characterization of his work, when reproached with its occasional lack of continuity and finish, was that his aim was to make his point, and the exigencies of money and time under which he labored were to blame for the defects which, with his keen literary judgment, he perceived quite as clearly as did his critics. If that point be borne in mind, it will help the reader to appreciate his literary-journalistic style, and to pardon shortcomings for the sake of the pearls of principle and psychology which can be fished up from the profound depths of his voluminous tomes, and of his analysis. The gospel which Dostoévsky consistently preached, from the beginning of his career to the end, was love, self-sacrifice even to self-effacement. That was and is the secret of his power, even over those who did not follow his precepts.

Isabel F. Hapgood

FROM ‹POOR PEOPLE›

LETTER FROM VARVARA DOBROSYELOFF TO MAKAR DYEVUSHKIN

POKROVSKY was a poor, very poor young man; his health did not permit of his attending regularly to his studies, and so it was only by way of custom that we called him a student. He lived modestly, peaceably, quietly, so that we could not even hear him from our room. He was very queer in appearance; he walked so awkwardly, bowed so uncouthly, spoke in such a peculiar manner, that at first I could not look at him without laughing. Moreover, he was of an irritable character, was constantly getting angry, flew into a rage at the slightest trifle, shouted at us, complained of us, and often went off to his own room in a fit of wrath without finishing our lesson. He had a great many books, all of them expensive, rare books. He gave lessons somewhere else also, received some remuneration, and just as soon as he had a little money, he went off and bought more books.

In time I learned to understand him better. He was the kindest, the most worthy man, the best man I ever met. My mother respected him highly. Later on, he became my best friend — after my mother, of course. . . .

From time to time a little old man made his appearance at our house — a dirty, badly dressed, small, gray-haired, sluggish, awkward old fellow; in short, he was peculiar to the last degree. At first sight one would have thought that he felt ashamed of something, that his conscience smote him for something. He writhed and twisted constantly; he had such tricks of manner and ways of shrugging his shoulders, that one would not have been far wrong in assuming that he was a little crazy. He would come and stand close to the glazed door in the vestibule, and not dare to enter. As soon as one of us, Sasha or I or one of the servants whom he knew to be kindly disposed toward him, passed that way, he would begin to wave his hands, and beckon us to him, and make signs; and only when we nodded to him or called to him, — the signal agreed upon, that there was no stranger in the house and that he might enter when he pleased, — only then would the old man softly open the door, with a joyous smile, rubbing his hands together with delight, and betake himself to Pokrovsky's room. He was his father.

Afterward I learned in detail the story of this poor old man. Once upon a time he had been in the government service somewhere or other, but he had not the slightest capacity, and his place in the service was the lowest and most insignificant of all. When his first wife died (the mother of the student Pokrovsky), he took it into his head to marry again, and wedded a woman from the petty-merchant class. Under the rule of this new wife, everything was at sixes and sevens in his house; there was no living with her; she drew a tight rein over everybody. Student Pokrovsky was a boy at that time, ten years of age. His stepmother hated him. But fate was kind to little Pokrovsky. Bykoff, a landed proprietor, who was acquainted with Pokrovsky the father and had formerly been his benefactor, took the child under his protection and placed him in a school. He took an interest in him because he had known his dead mother, whom Anna Feodorovna had befriended while she was still a girl, and who had married her off to Pokrovsky. From school young Pokrovsky entered a gymnasium, and then the University, but his impaired health prevented his continuing his studies there. Mr. Bykoff introduced him to Anna Feodorovna, recommended him to her, and in this way young Pokrovsky had been taken into the house as a boarder, on condition that he should teach Sasha all that was necessary.

But old Pokrovsky fell into the lowest dissipation through grief at his wife's harshness, and was almost always in a state of drunkenness. His wife beat him, drove him into the kitchen to live, and brought matters to such a point that at last he got used to being beaten and ill-treated, and made no complaint. He was still far from being an old man, but his evil habits had nearly destroyed his mind. The only sign in him of noble human sentiments was his boundless love for his son. It was said that young Pokrovsky was as like his dead mother as two drops of water to each other. The old man could talk of nothing but his son, and came to see him regularly twice a week. He dared not come more frequently, because young Pokrovsky could not endure his father's visits. Of all his failings, the first and greatest, without a doubt, was his lack of respect for his father. However, the old man certainly was at times the most intolerable creature in the world. In the first place he was dreadfully inquisitive; in the second, by his chatter and questions he interfered with his son's occupations; and lastly, he sometimes presented himself in a state of intoxication. The son broke the father, in a degree, of his faults,—of his inquisitiveness and his chattering; and ultimately brought about such a condition of affairs that the latter listened to all he said as to an oracle, and dared not open his mouth without his permission.

There were no bounds to the old man's admiration of and delight in his Petinka, as he called his son. When he came to visit him he almost always wore a rather anxious, timid expression, probably on account of his uncertainty as to how his son would receive him, and generally could not make up his mind for a long time to go in; and if I happened to be present, he would question me for twenty minutes: How was Petinka? Was he well? In what mood was he, and was not he occupied in something important? What, precisely, was he doing? Was he writing, or engaged in meditation? When I had sufficiently encouraged and soothed him, the old man would at last make up his mind to enter, and would open the door very, very softly, very, very cautiously, and stick his head in first; and if he saw that his son was not angry, and nodded to him, he would step gently into the room, take off his little coat, and his hat, which was always crumpled, full of holes and with broken rims, and hang them on a hook, doing everything very softly, and inaudibly. Then he would seat himself cautiously on a chair and never take his eyes from his son, but would watch his every movement in his desire to divine the state of his Petinka's temper. If the son was not exactly in the right mood, and the old man detected it, he instantly rose from his seat and explained, «I only ran in for a minute, Petinka. I have been walking a good ways, and happened to be passing by, so I came in to rest myself.» And then silently he took his poor little coat and his wretched little hat, opened the door again very softly, and went away, forcing a smile in order to suppress the grief which was seething up in his soul, and not betray it to his son.

But when the son received his father well, the old man was beside himself with joy. His satisfaction shone forth in his face, in his gestures, in his movements. If his son addressed a remark to him, the old man always rose a little from his chair, and replied softly, cringingly, almost reverently, and always made an effort to employ the most select, that is to say, the most ridiculous expressions. But he had not the gift of language; he always became confused and frightened, so that he did not know what to do with his hands, or what to do with his person, and went on, for a long time afterward, whispering his answer to himself, as though desirous of recovering his composure. But if he succeeded in making a good answer, the old man gained courage, set his waistcoat to rights, and his cravat and his coat, and assumed an air of personal dignity. Sometimes his courage rose to such a point, his daring reached such a height, that he rose gently from his chair, went up to the shelf of books, took down a book. He did all this with an air of artificial indifference and coolness, as though he could always handle his son's books in this proprietary manner, as though his son's caresses were no rarity to him. But I once happened to witness the old man's fright when Pokrovsky asked him not to touch his books. He became confused, hurriedly replaced the book upside down, then tried to put it right, turned it round and set it wrong side to, leaves out, smiled, reddened, and did not know how to expiate his crime.

One day old Pokrovsky came in to see us. He chatted with us for a long time, was unusually cheerful, alert, talkative; he laughed and joked after his fashion, and at last revealed the secret of his raptures, and announced to us that his Petinka's birthday fell precisely a week later, and that it was his intention to call upon his son, without fail, on that day; that he would don a new waistcoat, and that his wife had promised to buy him some new boots. In short, the old man was perfectly happy, and chattered about everything that came into his head.

His birthday! That birthday gave me no peace, either day or night. I made up my mind faithfully to remind Pokrovsky of my friendship, and to make him a present. But what? At last I hit upon the idea of giving him some books. I knew that he wished to own the complete works of Pushkin, in the latest edition. I had thirty rubles of my own, earned by my handiwork. I had put this money aside for a new gown. I immediately sent old Matryona, our cook, to inquire the price of a complete set. Alas! The price of the eleven volumes, together with the expenses of binding, would be sixty rubles at the very least. I thought and thought, but could not tell what to do. I did not wish to ask my mother. Of course she would have helped me; but, in that case every one in the house would have known about our gift; moreover, the gift would have been converted into an expression of gratitude, a payment for Pokrovsky's labors for the whole year. My desire was to make the present privately, unknown to any one. And for his toilsome lessons to me I wished to remain forever indebted to him, without any payment whatever. At last I devised an escape from my predicament. I knew that one could often buy at half price from the old booksellers in the Gostinny Dvor, if one bargained well, little used and almost entirely new books. I made up my mind to go to the Gostinny Dvor myself. So it came about; the very next morning both Anna Feodorovna and we needed something. Mamma was not feeling well, and Anna Feodorovna, quite opportunely, had a fit of laziness, so all the errands were turned over to me, and I set out with Matryona.

To my delight I soon found a Pushkin, and in a very handsome binding. I began to bargain for it. How I enjoyed it! But alas! My entire capital consisted of thirty rubles in paper, and the merchant would not consent to accept less than ten rubles in silver. At last I began to entreat him, and I begged and begged, until eventually he yielded. But he only took off two rubles and a half, and swore that he had done so only for my sake, because I was such a nice young lady, and that he would not have come down in his price for any one else. Two rubles and a half were still lacking! I was ready to cry with vexation. But the most unexpected circumstance came to my rescue in my grief. Not far from me, at another stall, I caught sight of old Pokrovsky. Four or five old booksellers were clustered about him; he had completely lost his wits, and they had thoroughly bewildered him. Each one was offering him his wares, and what stuff they were offering, and what all was he not ready to buy! I stepped up to him and asked him what he was doing there? The old man was very glad to see me; he loved me unboundedly,—no less than his Petinka, perhaps. «Why, I am buying a few little books, Varvara Alexievna,» he replied; «I am buying some books for Petinka.» I asked him if he had much money? «See here,»—and the poor old man took out all his money, which was wrapped up in a dirty scrap of newspaper; «here's a half-ruble, and a twenty-kopek piece, and twenty kopeks in copper coins.» I immediately dragged him off to my bookseller. «Here are eleven books, which cost altogether thirty-two rubles and a half; I have thirty; put your two rubles and a half with mine, and we will buy all these books and give them to him in partnership.» The old man was quite beside himself with joy, and the bookseller loaded him down with our common library.

The next day the old man came to see his son, sat with him a little while, then came to us and sat down beside me with a very comical air of mystery. Every moment he grew more sad and uneasy; at last he could hold out no longer.

«Listen, Varvara Alexievna,» he began timidly, in a low voice: «do you know what, Varvara Alexievna?» The old man was dreadfully embarrassed. «You see, when his birthday comes, do you take ten of those little books and give them to him yourself, that is to say, from yourself, on your own behalf; then I will take the eleventh and give it from myself, for my share. So you see, you will have something to give, and I shall have something to give; we shall both have something to give.»

I was awfully sorry for the old man. I did not take long to think it over. The old man watched me anxiously. «Listen to me, Zakhar Petrovitch,» I said: «do you give him all.»—«How all? Do you mean all the books?»—«Yes, certainly, all the books.»—«And from myself?»—«From yourself.»—«From myself alone—that is, in my own name?»—«Yes, in your own name.» I thought I was expressing myself with sufficient clearness, but the old man could not understand me for a long time.

«You see,» he explained to me at last, «I sometimes indulge myself, Varvara Alexievna,—that is to say, I wish to state to you that I nearly always indulge myself,—I do that which is not right,—that is, you know, when it is cold out of doors, and when various unpleasant things happen at times, or when I feel sad for any reason, or something bad happens,—then sometimes, I do not restrain myself, and I drink too much. This is very disagreeable to Petrushka, you see, Varvara Alexievna; he gets angry, and he scolds me and reads me moral lectures. So now I should like to show him by my gift that I have reformed, and am beginning to conduct myself well; that I have been saving up my money to buy a book, saving for a long time, because I hardly ever have any money, except when it happens that Petrushka gives me some now and then. He knows that. Consequently, he will see what use I have made of my money, and he will know that I have done this for his sake alone.» . . .

«Well, yes,» he said, after thinking it over, «yes! That will be very fine, that would be very fine indeed,—only, what are you going to do, Varvara Alexievna?»—«Why, I shall not give anything.»—«What!» cried the old man almost in terror; «so you will not give Petinka anything, so you do not wish to give him anything?» He was alarmed. At that moment it seemed as though he were ready to relinquish his own suggestions, so that I might have something to give his son. He was a kind-hearted old man! I explained that I would be glad to give something, only I did not wish to deprive him of the pleasure.

. . . .

On the festive day he made his appearance at precisely eleven o'clock, straight from the mass, in his dress coat, decently patched, and actually in a new waistcoat and new boots. We were all sitting in the hall with Anna Feodorovna, and drinking coffee (it was Sunday). The old man began, I believe, by saying that Pushkin was a good poet; then he lost the thread of his discourse and got confused, and suddenly jumped to the assertion that a man must behave well, and that if he does not behave himself well, then it simply means that he indulges himself; he even cited several terrible examples of intemperance, and wound up by stating that for some time past he had been entirely a reformed character, and that he now behaved with perfect propriety. That even earlier he had recognized the justice of his son's exhortations, and had treasured them all in his heart, and had actually begun to be sober. In proof of which he now presented these books, which had been purchased with money which he had been hoarding up for a long time.

I could not refrain from tears and laughter, as I listened to the poor old fellow; he knew well how to lie when the occasion demanded! The books were taken to Pokrovsky's room and placed on the shelf. Pokrovsky immediately divined the truth.

. . . .

Pokrovsky fell ill, two months after the events which I have described above. During those two months he had striven incessantly for the means of existence, for up to that time he had never had a settled position. Like all consumptives, he bade farewell only with his last breath to the hope of a very long life. . . . Anna Feodorovna herself made all the arrangements about the funeral. She bought the very plainest sort of a coffin, and hired a truckman. In order to repay herself for her expenditure, Anna Feodorovna took possession of all the dead man's books and effects. The old man wrangled with her, raised an uproar, snatched from her as many books as possible, stuffed all his pockets with them, thrust them into his hat and wherever he could, carried them about with him all the three days which preceded the funeral, and did not even part with them when the time came to go to the church. During all those days he was like a man stunned, who has lost his memory, and he kept fussing about near the coffin with a certain strange anxiety; now he adjusted the paper band upon the dead man's brow, now he lighted and snuffed the candles. It was evident that he could not fix his thoughts in orderly manner on anything. Neither my mother nor Anna Feodorovna went to the funeral services in the church. My mother was ill, but Anna Feodorovna quarreled with old Pokrovsky just as she was all ready to start, and so stayed away. The old man and I were the only persons present. A sort of fear came over me during the services — like the presentiment of something which was about to happen. I could hardly stand out the ceremony in church. At last they put the lid on the coffin and nailed it down, placed it on the cart and drove away. I accompanied it only to the end of the street. The truckman drove at a trot. The old man ran after the cart, weeping aloud; the sound of his crying was broken and shaken by his running. The poor man lost his hat and did not stop to pick it up. His head was wet with the rain; the sleet lashed and cut his face. The old man did not appear to feel the bad weather, but ran weeping from one side of the cart to the other. The skirts of his shabby old coat waved in the wind like wings. Books protruded from every one of his pockets; in his hands was a huge book, which he held tightly clutched. The passers-by removed their hats and made the sign of the cross. Some halted and stared in amazement at the poor old man. Every moment the books kept falling out of his pockets into the mud. People stopped him, and pointed out his losses to him; he picked them up, and set out again in pursuit of the coffin. At the corner of the street an old beggar woman joined herself to him to escort the coffin. At last the cart turned the corner, and disappeared from my eyes. I went home. I flung myself, in dreadful grief, on my mother's bosom.

LETTER FROM MAKAR DYEVUSHKIN TO VARVARA ALEXIEVNA DOBROSYELOFF

SEPTEMBER 9TH.

My dear Varvara Alexievna!

I am quite beside myself as I write this. I am utterly upset by a most terrible occurrence. My head is whirling. I feel as though everything were turning in dizzy circles round about me. Ah, my dearest, what a thing I have to tell you now! We had not even a presentiment of such a thing. No, I don't believe that I did not have a presentiment — I foresaw it all. My heart forewarned me of this whole thing! I even dreamed of something like it not long ago.

This is what has happened! I will relate it to you without attempting fine style, and as the Lord shall put it into my soul. I went to the office to-day. When I arrived, I sat down and began to write. But you must know, my dear, that I wrote yesterday also. Well, yesterday Timofei Ivan'itch came to me, and was pleased to give me a personal order. « Here's a document that is much needed,» says he, «and we're in a hurry for it. Copy it, Makar Alexievitch,» says he, « as quickly and as neatly and carefully as possible: it must be handed in for signature to-day.» I must explain to you, my angel, that I was not quite myself yesterday, and didn't wish to look at anything; such sadness and depression had fallen upon me! My heart was cold, my mind was dark; you filled all my memory, and incessantly, my poor darling. Well, so I set to work on the copy; I wrote clearly and well, only,— I don't know exactly how to describe it to you, whether the Evil One himself tangled me up, or whether it was decreed by some mysterious fate, or simply whether it was bound to happen so, but I omitted a whole line, and the sense was utterly ruined. The Lord only knows what sense there was — simply none whatever. They were late with the papers yesterday, so they only gave this document to his Excellency for signature this morning. To-day I presented myself at the usual hour, as though nothing at all were the matter, and set myself down alongside Emelyan Ivanovitch.

I must tell you, my dear, that lately I have become twice as shamefaced as before, and more mortified. Of late I have ceased to look at any one. As soon as any one's chair squeaks, I am more dead than alive. So to-day I crept in, slipped humbly into my seat, and sat there all doubled up, so that Efim Akimovitch (he's the greatest tease in the world) remarked in such a way that all could hear him, « Why do you sit so like a y-y-y, Makar Alexievitch ?» Then he made such a grimace that everybody round him and me split with laughter, and of course at my expense. They kept it up interminably! I drooped my ears and screwed up my eyes, and sat there motionless. That's my way; they stop the quicker. All at once I heard a noise, a running and a tumult; I heard — did my ears deceive me? They were calling for me, demanding me, summoning Dyevushkin. My heart quivered in my breast, and I didn't know myself what I feared, for nothing of the sort had ever happened to me in the whole course of my life. I was rooted to my chair,— as though nothing had occurred, as though it were not I. But then they began again, nearer at hand, and nearer still. And here they were, right in my very ear: « Dyevushkin! Dyevushkin!» they called; « where's Dyevushkin ?» I raise my eyes, and there before me stands Evstafiy Ivanovitch; he says: — « Makar Alexievitch, hasten to his Excellency as quickly as possible! You've made a nice mess with that document!»

That was all he said, but it was enough, wasn't it, my dear, — quite enough to say? I turned livid, and grew as cold as ice, and lost my senses; I started, and I simply didn't know whether I was alive or dead as I went. They led me through one room, and through another room, and through a third room, to the private office, and I presented myself! Positively, I cannot give you any account of what I was thinking about. I saw his Excellency standing there, with all of them around him. It appears that I did not make my salute; I forgot it completely. I was so scared that my lips trembled and my legs shook. And there was sufficient cause, my dear. In the first place, I was ashamed of myself; I glanced to the right, at a mirror, and what I beheld therein was enough to drive any man out of his senses. And in the second place, I have always behaved as though there were no place for me in the world. So that it is not likely that his Excellency was even aware of my existence. It is possible that he may have heard it cursorily mentioned that there was a person named Dyevushkin in the department, but he had never come into any closer relations.

He began angrily, « What's the meaning of this, sir? What are you staring at? Here's an important paper, needed in haste, and you go and spoil it. And how did you come to permit such a thing?» Here his Excellency turned on Evstafiy Ivanovitch. I only listen, and the sounds of the words reach me: «It's gross carelessness. Heedlessness! You'll get yourself into trouble!» I tried to open my mouth for some purpose or other. I seemed to want to ask forgiveness, but I couldn't; to run away, but I didn't dare to make the attempt: and then — then, my dearest, something so dreadful happened that I can hardly hold my pen even now for the shame of it. My button — deuce take it — my button, which was hanging by a thread, suddenly broke loose, jumped off, skipped along (evidently I had struck it by accident), clattered and rolled away, the cursed thing, straight to his Excellency's feet, and that in the midst of universal silence. And that was the whole of my justification, all my excuse, all my answer, everything which I was preparing to say to his Excellency!

The results were terrible! His Excellency immediately directed his attention to my figure and my costume. I remembered what I had seen in the mirror; I flew to catch the button! A fit of madness descended upon me! I bent down and tried to grasp the button, but it rolled and twisted, and I couldn't get hold of it, in short, and I also distinguished myself in the matter of dexterity. Then I felt my last strength fail me, and knew that all, all was lost! My whole reputation was lost, the whole man ruined! And then, without rhyme or reason, Teresa and Faldoni began to ring in both my ears. At last I succeeded in seizing the button, rose upright, drew myself up in proper salute, but like a fool, and stood calmly there with my hands lined down on the seams of my trousers! No, I didn't, though. I began to try to fit the button on the broken thread, just as though it would stick fast by that means; and moreover, I began to smile and went on smiling.

At first his Excellency turned away; then he scrutinized me again, and I heard him say to Evstafiy Ivanovitch: — «How's this? See what a condition he is in! What a looking man! What's the matter with him?» Ah, my own dearest, think of that — «What a looking man!» and «What's the matter with him!» — «He has distinguished himself!» I heard Evstafiy say; «he has no bad marks, no bad marks on any score, and his conduct is exemplary; his salary is adequate, in accordance with the rates.» «Well then, give him some sort of assistance,» says his

Excellency; «make him an advance on his salary.»—«But he has had it, he has taken it already, for ever so long in advance. Probably circumstances have compelled him to do so; but his conduct is good, and he has received no reprimands, he has never been rebuked.» My dear little angel, I turned hot and burned as though in the fires of the bad place! I was on the point of fainting. «Well,» says his Excellency in a loud voice, «the document must be copied again as quickly as possible; come here, Dyevushkin, make a fresh copy without errors; and listen to me;» here his Excellency turned to the others and gave them divers orders, and sent them all away. As soon as they were all gone, his Excellency hastily took out his pocket-book, and from it drew a hundred-ruble bank-note. «Here,» said he, «this is all I can afford, and I am happy to help to that extent; reckon it as you please, take it,»—and he thrust it into my hand. I trembled, my angel, my whole soul was in a flutter; I didn't know what was the matter with me; I tried to catch his hand and kiss it. But he turned very red in the face, my darling, and—I am not deviating from the truth by so much as a hair's-breadth—he took my unworthy hand, and shook it, indeed he did; he took it and shook it as though it were of equal rank with his own, as though it belonged to a General like himself. «Go,» says he; «I am glad to do what I can. Make no mistakes, but now do it as well as you can.»

Now, my dear, this is what I have decided: I beg you and Feodor—and if I had children I would lay my commands upon them—to pray to God for him; though they should not pray for their own father, that they should pray daily and forever, for his Excellency! One thing more I will say, my dearest, and I say it solemnly,—heed me well, my dear,—I swear that, no matter in what degree I may be reduced to spiritual anguish in the cruel days of our adversity, as I look on you and your poverty, on myself, on my humiliation and incapacity,—in spite of all this, I swear to you that the hundred rubles are not so precious to me as the fact that his Excellency himself deigned to press my unworthy hand, the hand of a straw, a drunkard! Thereby he restored my self-respect. By that deed he brought to life again my spirit, he made my existence sweeter forevermore, and I am firmly convinced that, however sinful I may be in the sight of the Almighty, yet my prayer for the happiness and prosperity of his Excellency will reach his throne!

My dearest, I am at present in the most terrible state of spiritual prostration, in a horribly overwrought condition. My heart beats as though it would burst out of my breast, and I seem to be weak all over. I send you forty-five rubles, paper money. I shall give twenty rubles to my landlady, and keep thirty-five for myself; with twenty I will get proper clothes, and the other fifteen will go for my living expenses. But just now all the impressions of this morning have shaken my whole being to the foundations. I am going to lie down for a bit. Nevertheless, I am calm, perfectly calm. Only, my soul aches, and down there, in the depths, my soul is trembling and throbbing and quivering. I shall go to see you; but just now I am simply intoxicated with all these emotions. God sees all, my dearest, my own darling, my precious one.

Your worthy friend,
MAKAR DYEVUSHKIN.

Translation of Isabel F. Hapgood.

THE BIBLE READING

From ‹Crime and Punishment›

RASKOLNIKOFF went straight to the water-side, where Sonia was living. The three-storied house was an old building, painted green. The young man had some difficulty in finding the dvornik, and got from him vague information about the quarters of the tailor Kapernasumoff. After having discovered in a corner of the yard the foot of a steep and gloomy staircase, he ascended to the second floor, and followed the gallery facing the court-yard. Whilst groping in the dark, and asking himself how Kapernasumoff's lodgings could be reached, a door opened close to him; he seized it mechanically.

«Who is there?» asked a timid female voice.

«It is I. I am coming to see you,» replied Raskolnikoff, on entering a small ante-room. There on a wretched table stood a candle, fixed in a candlestick of twisted metal.

«Is that you? Good heavens!» feebly replied Sonia, who seemed not to have strength enough to move from the spot.

«Where do you live? Is it here?» And Raskolnikoff passed quickly into the room, trying not to look the girl in the face.

A moment afterwards Sonia rejoined him with the candle, and remained stock still before him, a prey to an indescribable agitation. This unexpected visit had upset her — nay, even frightened her. All of a sudden her pale face colored up, and tears came into her eyes. She experienced extreme confusion, united with a certain gentle feeling. Raskolnikoff turned aside with a rapid movement and sat down on a chair, close to the table. In the twinkling of an eye he took stock of everything in the room.

This room was large, with a very low ceiling, and was the only one let out by the Kapernasumoffs; in the wall, on the left-hand side, was a door giving access to theirs. On the opposite side, in the wall on the right, there was another door, which was always locked. That was another lodging, having another number. Sonia's room was more like an out-house, of irregular rectangular shape, which gave it an uncommon character. The wall, with its three windows facing the canal, cut it obliquely, forming thus an extremely acute angle, in the back portion of which nothing could be seen, considering the feeble light of the candle. On the other hand, the other angle was an extremely obtuse one. This large room contained scarcely any furniture. In the right-hand corner was the bed; between the bed and the door, a chair; on the same side, facing the door of the next set, stood a deal table, covered with a blue cloth; close to the table were two rush chairs. Against the opposite wall, near the acute angle, was placed a small chest of drawers of unvarnished wood, which seemed out of place in this vacant spot. This was the whole of the furniture. The yellowish and worn paper had everywhere assumed a darkish color, probably the effect of the damp and coal smoke. Everything in the place denoted poverty. Even the bed had no curtains. Sonia silently considered the visitor, who examined her room so attentively and so unceremoniously.

. . . .

« Her lot is fixed,» thought he,—« a watery grave, the madhouse, or a brutish existence!» This latter contingency was especially repellent to him, but skeptic as he was, he could not help believing it a possibility. « Is it possible that such is really the case?» he asked himself. « Is it possible that this creature, who still retains a pure mind, should end by becoming deliberately mire-like? Has she not already become familiar with it, and if up to the present she has been able to bear with such a life, has it not been so because vice has already lost its hideousness in her eyes? Impossible again!» cried he, on his part, in the same way as Sonia had cried a moment ago. «No, that which up to the present has prevented her from throwing herself into the canal has been the fear of sin and its punishment. May she not be mad after all? Who says she is not so? Is she in full possession of all her faculties? Is it possible to speak as she does? Do people of sound judgment reason as she reasons? Can people anticipate future destruction with such tranquillity, turning a deaf ear to warnings and forebodings? Does she expect a miracle? It must be so. And does not all this seem like signs of mental derangement?»

To this idea he clung obstinately. Sonia mad! Such a prospect displeased him less than the other ones. Once more he examined the girl attentively. «And you—you often pray to God, Sonia?» he asked her.

No answer. Standing by her side, he waited for a reply. «What could I be, what should I be without God?» cried she in a low-toned but energetic voice, and whilst casting on Raskolnikoff a rapid glance of her brilliant eyes, she gripped his hand.

«Come, I was not mistaken!» he muttered to himself.—«And what does God do for you?» asked he, anxious to clear his doubts yet more.

For a long time the girl remained silent, as if incapable of reply. Emotion made her bosom heave. «Stay! Do not question me! You have no such right!» exclaimed she, all of a sudden, with looks of anger.

«I expected as much!» was the man's thought.

«God does everything for me!» murmured the girl rapidly, and her eyes sank.

«At last I have the explanation!» he finished mentally, whilst eagerly looking at her.

He experienced a new, strange, almost unhealthy feeling on watching this pale, thin, hard-featured face, these blue and soft eyes which could yet dart such lights and give utterance to such passion; in a word, this feeble frame, yet trembling with indignation and anger, struck him as weird,—nay, almost fantastic. «Mad! she must be mad!» he muttered once more. A book was lying on the chest of drawers. Raskolnikoff had noticed it more than once whilst moving about the room. He took it and examined it. It was a Russian translation of the Gospels, a well-thumbed leather-bound book.

« Where does that come from ? » asked he of Sonia, from the other end of the room.

The girl still held the same position, a pace or two from the table. « It was lent me, » replied Sonia, somewhat loth, without looking at Raskolnikoff.

« Who lent it you ? »

« Elizabeth — I asked her to ! »

« Elizabeth. How strange ! » he thought. Everything with Sonia assumed to his mind an increasingly extraordinary aspect. He took the book to the light, and turned it over. « Where is mention made of Lazarus ? » asked he abruptly.

Sonia, looking hard on the ground, preserved silence, whilst moving somewhat from the table.

« Where is mention made of the resurrection of Lazarus ? Find me the passage, Sonia. »

The latter looked askance at her interlocutor. « That is not the place — it is the Fourth Gospel, » said she dryly, without moving from the spot.

« Find me the passage and read it out ! » he repeated, and sitting down again rested his elbow on the table, his head on his hand, and glancing sideways with gloomy look, prepared to listen.

Sonia at first hesitated to draw nearer to the table. The singular wish uttered by Raskolnikoff scarcely seemed sincere. Nevertheless she took the book. « Have you ever read the passage ? » she asked him, looking at him from out the corners of her eyes. Her voice was getting harder and harder.

« Once upon a time. In my childhood. Read ! »

« Have you never heard it in church ? »

« I — I never go there. Do you go often yourself ? »

« No, » stammered Sonia.

Raskolnikoff smiled. « I understand, then, you won't go to-morrow to your father's funeral service ? »

« Oh, yes ! I was at church last week. I was present at a requiem mass. »

« Whose was that ? »

« Elizabeth's. She was assassinated by means of an axe. »

Raskolnikoff's nervous system became more and more irritated. He was getting giddy. « Were you friends with her ? »

« Yes. She was straightforward. She used to come and see me — but not often. She was not able. We used to read and chat. She sees God. »

Raskolnikoff became thoughtful. «What,» asked he himself, «could be the meaning of the mysterious interviews of two such idiots as Sonia and Elizabeth? Why, I should go mad here myself!» thought he. «Madness seems to be in the atmosphere of the place!—Read!» he cried all of a sudden, irritably.

Sonia kept hesitating. Her heart beat loud. She seemed afraid to read. He considered «this poor demented creature» with an almost sad expression. «How can that interest you, since you do not believe?» she muttered in a choking voice.

«Read! I insist upon it! Used you not to read to Elizabeth?»

Sonia opened the book and looked for the passage. Her hands trembled. The words stuck in her throat. Twice did she try to read without being able to utter the first syllable.

«Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany,» she read, at last, with an effort; but suddenly, at the third word, her voice grew wheezy, and gave way like an overstretched chord. Breath was deficient in her oppressed bosom. Raskolnikoff partly explained to himself Sonia's hesitation to obey him; and in proportion as he understood her better, he insisted still more imperiously on her reading. He felt what it must cost the girl to lay bare to him, to some extent, her heart of hearts. She evidently could not, without difficulty, make up her mind to confide to a stranger the sentiments which probably since her teens had been her support, her *viaticum*—when, what with a sottish father and a stepmother demented by misfortune, to say nothing of starving children, she heard nothing but reproach and offensive clamor. He saw all this, but he likewise saw that notwithstanding this repugnance, she was most anxious to read,—to read to him, and that now,—let the consequences be what they may! The girl's look, the agitation to which she was a prey, told him as much, and by a violent effort over herself Sonia conquered the spasm which parched her throat, and continued to read the eleventh chapter of the Gospel according to St. John. She thus reached the nineteenth verse:—

> «And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Then Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him; but Mary sat still in the house. Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee.»

Here she paused, to overcome the emotion which once more caused her voice to tremble.

> «Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said unto her, I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him,» —

and although she had difficulty in breathing, Sonia raised her voice, as if in reading the words of Martha she was making her own confession of faith: —

> «Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world.»

She stopped, raised her eyes rapidly on him, but cast them down on her book, and continued to read. Raskolnikoff listened without stirring, without turning toward her, his elbows resting on the table, looking aside. Thus the reading continued till the thirty-second verse.

> «Then when Mary was come where Jesus was, and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit and was troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him. And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died?»

Raskolnikoff turned towards her and looked at her with agitation. His suspicion was a correct one. She was trembling in all her limbs, a prey to fever. He had expected this. She was getting to the miraculous story, and a feeling of triumph was taking possession of her. Her voice, strengthened by joy, had a metallic ring. The lines became misty to her troubled eyes, but fortunately she knew the passage by heart. At the last line, «Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind —» she lowered her voice, emphasizing passionately the doubt, the blame, the reproach of these unbelieving and blind Jews, who a moment after fell as if struck by lightning on their knees, to sob and to believe. «Yes,» thought she, deeply affected by this joyful hope, «yes, he — he who is blind, who dares not believe — he also will hear — will believe in an instant, immediately, now, this very moment!»

«Jesus therefore, again groaning in himself, cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been dead four days.»

She strongly emphasized the word *four*.

«Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. *And he that was dead came forth,*»—

(on reading these words Sonia shuddered, as if she herself had been witness to the miracle)

«bound hand and foot with grave-clothes; and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. *Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.*»

She read no more,— such a thing would have been impossible to her,— closed the book, and briskly rising, said in a low-toned and choking voice, without turning toward the man she was talking to, «So much for the resurrection of Lazarus.» She seemed afraid to raise her eyes on Raskolnikoff, whilst her feverish trembling continued. The dying piece of candle dimly lit up this low-ceiled room, in which an assassin and a harlot had just read the Book of books.

EDWARD DOWDEN

(1843-)

"We are all hunters, skillful or skilless, in literature—hunters for our spiritual good or for our pleasure," says Edward Dowden; and to his earnest research and careful exposition many readers owe a more thorough appreciation of literature. He was educated at Queen's College, Cork (his birthplace), and then at Trinity College, Dublin, where he received the Vice-Chancellor's prize in both English verse and English prose, and also the first English Moderatorship in logic and ethics. For two years he studied divinity. Then he obtained by examination a professorship of oratory at the University of Dublin, where he was afterwards elected professor of English literature. The scholarship of his literary work has won him many honors. In 1888 he was chosen president of the English Goethe Society, to succeed Professor Müller. The following year he was appointed first Taylorian lecturer in the Taylor Institute, Oxford. The Royal Irish Academy has bestowed the Cunningham gold medal upon him, and he has also received the honorary degree LL. D. of the University of Edinburgh, and from Princeton University.

Very early in life Professor Dowden began to express his feeling for literature, and the instinct which leads him to account for a work by study of its author's personality. For more than twenty years English readers have known him as a frequent contributor of critical essays to the leading reviews. These have been collected into the delightful volumes 'Studies in Literature' and 'Transcripts and Studies.' His has been called "an honest method, wholesome as sweet." He would offer more than a mere résumé of what his author expresses. He would be one of the interpreters and transmitters of new forms of thought to the masses of readers who lack time or ability to discover values for themselves. Very widely read himself, he is fitted for just comparisons and comprehensive views. As has been pointed out, he is fond of working from a general consideration of a period with its formative influences, to the particular care of the author with whom he is dealing. Saintsbury tells us that Mr. Dowden's procedure is to ask his author a series of questions which seem to him of vital importance, and find out how he would answer them.

Dowden's style is careful, clear, and thorough, showing his scholarship and incisive thought. His form of expression is strongly picturesque. It is nowhere more so than in ‘Shakespeare: a Study of His Mind and Art.’ This, his most noteworthy work, has been very widely read and admired. His intimate acquaintance with German criticism upon the great Elizabethan especially fitted him to present fresh considerations to the public.

He has also written a brilliant ‘Life of Shelley’ (bitterly criticized by Mark Twain in the North American Review, ‘A Defense of Harriet Shelley’), and a ‘Life of Southey’ in the English Men of Letters Series; and edited most capably ‘Southey's Correspondence with Caroline Bowles,’ ‘The Correspondence of Sir Henry Taylor,’ ‘Shakespeare's Sonnets,’ ‘The Passionate Pilgrim,’ and a collection of ‘Lyrical Ballads.’

THE HUMOR OF SHAKESPEARE

From ‘Shakespeare: a Critical Study of His Mind and Art’

A STUDY of Shakespeare which fails to take account of Shakespeare's humor must remain essentially incomplete. The character and spiritual history of a man who is endowed with a capacity for humorous appreciation of the world must differ throughout, and in every particular, from that of the man whose moral nature has never rippled over with genial laughter. At whatever final issue Shakespeare arrived after long spiritual travail as to the attainment of his life, that precise issue, rather than another, was arrived at in part by virtue of the fact of Shakespeare's humor. In the composition of forces which determined the orbit traversed by the mind of the poet, this must be allowed for as a force among others, in importance not the least, and efficient at all times even when little apparent. A man whose visage «holds one stern intent» from day to day, and whose joy becomes at times almost a supernatural rapture, may descend through circles of hell to the narrowest and the lowest; he may mount from sphere to sphere of Paradise until he stands within the light of the Divine Majesty; but he will hardly succeed in presenting us with an adequate image of life as it is on this earth of ours, in its oceanic amplitude and variety. A few men of genius there have been, who with vision penetrative as lightning have gazed as it were *through* life, at some eternal significances of which life is the symbol. Intent upon its sacred meaning, they have had no eye to note the forms of the grotesque hieroglyph of human existence. Such men are not framed for laughter. To this little group the creator of Falstaff, of Bottom, and of Touchstone does not belong.

Shakespeare, who saw life more widely and wisely than any other of the seers, could laugh. That is a comfortable fact to bear in mind; a fact which serves to rescue us from the domination of intense and narrow natures, who claim authority by virtue of their grasp of one-half of the realities of our existence and their denial of the rest. Shakespeare could laugh. But we must go on to ask, «What did he laugh at? and what was the manner of his laughter?» There are as many modes of laughter as there are facets of the common soul of humanity, to reflect the humorous appearances of the world. Hogarth, in one of his pieces of coarse yet subtile engraving, has presented a group of occupants of the pit of a theatre, sketched during the performance of some broad comedy or farce. What proceeds upon the stage is invisible and undiscoverable, save as we catch its reflection on the faces of the spectators, in the same way that we infer a sunset from the evening flame upon windows that front the west. Each laughing face in Hogarth's print exhibits a different mode or a different stage of the risible paroxysm. There is the habitual enjoyer of the broad comic, abandoned to his mirth, which is open and unashamed; mirth which he is evidently a match for, and able to sustain. By his side is a companion female portrait — a woman with head thrown back to ease the violence of the guffaw; all her loose redundant flesh is tickled into an orgasm of merriment; she is fairly overcome. On the other side sits the spectator who has passed the climax of his laughter; he wipes the tears from his eyes, and is on the way to regain an insecure and temporary composure. Below appears a girl of eighteen or twenty, whose vacancy of intellect is captured and occupied by the innocuous folly still in progress; she gazes on expectantly, assured that a new blossom of the wonder of absurdity is about to display itself. Her father, a man who does not often surrender himself to an indecent convulsion, leans his face upon his hand, and with the other steadies himself by grasping one of the iron spikes that inclose the orchestra. In the right corner sits the humorist, whose eyes, around which the wrinkles gather, are half closed, while he already goes over the jest a second time in his imagination. At the opposite side an elderly woman is seen, past the period when animal violences are possible, laughing because she knows there is something to laugh at, though she is too dull-witted to know precisely what. One spectator, as we guess from his introverted air, is laughing to think what somebody else would think of this. Finally, the thin-lipped, perk-nosed person of refinement looks aside, and by his critical indifference condemns the broad, injudicious mirth of the company.

All these laughers of Hogarth are very commonplace, and some are very vulgar persons; one trivial, ludicrous spectacle is the occasion of their mirth. When from such laughter as this we turn to the laughter of men of genius, who gaze at the total play of the world's life; and when we listen to this, as with the ages it goes on gathering and swelling, our sense of hearing is enveloped and almost annihilated by the chorus of mock and jest, of antic and buffoonery, of tender mirth and indignant satire, of monstrous burlesque and sly absurdity, of desperate misanthropic derision and genial affectionate caressing of human imperfection and human folly. We hear from behind the mask the enormous laughter of Aristophanes, ascending peal above peal until it passes into jubilant ecstasy, or from the uproar springs some exquisite lyric strain. We hear laughter of passionate indignation from Juvenal, the indignation of «the ancient and free soul of the dead republics.» And there is Rabelais, with his huge buffoonery, and the earnest eyes intent on freedom, which look out at us in the midst of the zany's tumblings and indecencies. And Cervantes, with his refined Castilian air and deep melancholy mirth, at odds with the enthusiasm which is dearest to his soul. And Molière, with his laughter of unerring good sense, undeluded by fashion or vanity or folly or hypocrisy, and brightly mocking these into modesty. And Milton, with his fierce objurgatory laughter,—Elijah-like insult against the enemies of freedom and of England. And Voltaire, with his quick intellectual scorn and eager malice of the brain. And there is the urbane and amiable play of Addison's invention, not capable of large achievement, but stirring the corners of the mouth with a humane smile,—gracious gayety for the breakfast-tables of England. And Fielding's careless mastery of the whole broad common field of mirth. And Sterne's exquisite curiosity of oddness, his subtile extravagances and humors prepense. And there is the tragic laughter of Swift, which announces the extinction of reason, and loss beyond recovery of human faith and charity and hope. How in this chorus of laughters, joyous and terrible, is the laughter of Shakespeare distinguishable?

In the first place, the humor of Shakespeare, like his total genius, is many-sided. He does not pledge himself as dramatist to any one view of human life. If we open a novel by Charles Dickens, we feel assured beforehand that we are condemned to an exuberance of philanthropy; we know how the writer will insist that we must all be good friends, all be men and brothers, intoxicated with the delight of one another's presence; we expect him to hold out the right hand of fellowship to man, woman, and child; we are prepared for the bacchanalia of benevolence. The lesson we have to learn from this teacher is, that with the exception of a few inevitable and incredible monsters of cruelty, every man naturally engendered of the offspring of Adam is of his own nature inclined to every amiable virtue. Shakespeare abounds in kindly mirth: he receives an exquisite pleasure from the alert wit and bright good sense of a Rosalind; he can dandle a fool as tenderly as any nurse qualified to take a baby from the birth can deal with her charge. But Shakespeare is not pledged to deep-dyed ultra-amiability. With Jacques, he can rail at the world while remaining curiously aloof from all deep concern about its interests, this way or that. With Timon he can turn upon the world with a rage no less than that of Swift, and discover in man and woman a creature as abominable as the Yahoo. In other words, the humor of Shakespeare, like his total genius, is dramatic.

Then again, although Shakespeare laughs incomparably, mere laughter wearies him. The only play of Shakespeare's, out of nearly forty, which is farcical, — 'The Comedy of Errors,' — was written in the poet's earliest period of authorship, and was formed upon the suggestion of a preceding piece. It has been observed with truth by Gervinus that the farcical incidents of this play have been connected by Shakespeare with a tragic background, which is probably his own invention. With beauty, or with pathos, or with thought, Shakespeare can mingle his mirth; and then he is happy, and knows how to deal with play of wit or humorous characterization; but an entirely comic subject somewhat disconcerts the poet. On this ground, if no other were forthcoming, it might be suspected that 'The Taming of the Shrew' was not altogether the work of Shakespeare's hand. The secondary intrigues and minor incidents were of little interest to the poet. But in the buoyant force of Petruchio's character, in his subduing tempest of high spirits, and in the person of the foiled revoltress against the law of sex, who carries into her wifely loyalty the same energy which she had shown in her virgin *sauvagerie*, there were elements of human character in which the imagination of the poet took delight.

Unless it be its own excess, however, Shakespeare's laughter seems to fear nothing. It does not, when it has once arrived at its full development, fear enthusiasm, or passion, or tragic intensity; nor do these fear it. The traditions of the English drama had favored the juxtaposition of the serious and comic: but it was reserved for Shakespeare to make each a part of the other; to interpenetrate tragedy with comedy, and comedy with tragic earnestness.

SHAKESPEARE'S PORTRAITURE OF WOMEN

From ‹Transcripts and Studies›

Of all the daughters of his imagination, which did Shakespeare love the best? Perhaps we shall not err if we say one of the latest born of them all,—our English Imogen. And what most clearly shows us how Shakespeare loved Imogen is this—he has given her faults, and has made them exquisite, so that we love her better for their sake. No one has so quick and keen a sensibility to whatever pains and to whatever gladdens as she. To her a word is a blow; and as she is quick in her sensibility, so she is quick in her perceptions, piercing at once through the Queen's false show of friendship; quick in her contempt for what is unworthy, as for all professions of love from the clown-prince, Cloten; quick in her resentment, as when she discovers the unjust suspicions of Posthumus. Wronged she is indeed by her husband, but in her haste she too grows unjust; yet she is dearer to us for the sake of this injustice, proceeding as it does from the sensitiveness of her love. It is she, to whom a word is a blow, who actually receives a buffet from her husband's hand; but for Imogen it is a blessed stroke, since it is the evidence of his loyalty and zeal on her behalf. In a moment he is forgiven, and her arms are round his neck.

Shakespeare made so many perfect women unhappy that he owed us some *amende.* And he has made that *amende* by letting us see one perfect woman supremely happy. Shall our last glance at Shakespeare's plays show us Florizel at the rustic merry-making, receiving blossoms from the hands of Perdita? or Ferdinand and Miranda playing chess in Prospero's cave, and winning one a king and one a queen, while the happy fathers gaze in from the entrance of the cave? We can see a more delightful sight than these — Imogen with her arms around the neck of Posthumus, while she puts an edge upon her joy by the playful challenge and mock reproach —

> «Why did you throw your wedded lady from you?
> Think that you are upon a rock, and now
> Throw me again;»

and he responds —

> «Hang there like a fruit, my soul,
> Till the tree die.»

We shall find in all Shakespeare no more blissful creatures than these two.

THE INTERPRETATION OF LITERATURE

From ‹Transcripts and Studies›

The happiest moment in a critic's hours of study is when, seemingly by some divination, but really as the result of patient observation and thought, he lights upon the central motive of a great work. Then, of a sudden, order begins to form itself from the crowd and chaos of his impressions and ideas. There is a moving hither and thither, a grouping or co-ordinating of all his recent experiences, which goes on of its own accord; and every instant his vision becomes clearer, and new meanings disclose themselves in what had been lifeless and unilluminated. It seems as if he could even stand by the artist's side and co-operate with him in the process of creating. With such a sense of joy upon him, the critic will think it no hard task to follow the artist to the sources from whence he drew his material,— it may be some dull chapter in an ancient chronicle, or some gross tale of passion by an Italian novelist,— and he will stand by and watch with exquisite pleasure the artist handling that crude material, and refashioning and refining it, and breathing into it the breath of a higher life. Even the minutest difference of text between an author's earlier and later draft, or a first and second edition, has now become a point not for dull commentatorship, but a point of life, at which he may touch with his finger the pulse of the creator in his fervor of creation.

From each single work of a great author we advance to his total work, and thence to the man himself,— to the heart and brain from which all this manifold world of wisdom and wit and passion and beauty has proceeded. Here again, before we address ourselves to the interpretation of the author's mind, we patiently submit ourselves to a vast series of impressions. And in accordance with Bacon's maxim that a prudent interrogation is the half of knowledge, it is right to provide ourselves with a number of well-considered questions which we may address to our author. Let us cross-examine him as students of mental and moral science, and find replies in his written words. Are his senses vigorous and fine? Does he see color as well as form? Does he delight in all that appeals to the sense of hearing — the voices of nature, and the melody and harmonies of the art of man? Thus Wordsworth, exquisitely organized for enjoying and interpreting all natural, and if we may so say, homeless and primitive sounds, had but little feeling for the delights of music. Can he enrich his poetry by gifts from the sense of smell, as did Keats; or is his nose like Wordsworth's, an idle promontory projecting into a desert air? Has he like Browning a vigorous pleasure in all strenuous muscular movements; or does he like Shelley live rapturously in the finest nervous thrills? How does he experience and interpret the feeling of sex, and in what parts of his entire nature does that feeling find its elevating connections and associations? What are his special intellectual powers? Is his intellect combative or contemplative? What are the laws which chiefly preside over the associations of his ideas? What are the emotions which he feels most strongly? and how do his emotions coalesce with one another? Wonder, terror, awe, love, grief, hope, despondency, the benevolent affections, admiration, the religious sentiment, the moral sentiment, the emotion of power, irascible emotion, ideal emotion — how do these make themselves felt in and through his writings? What is his feeling for the beautiful, the sublime, the ludicrous? Is he of weak or vigorous will? In the conflict of motives, which class of motives with him is likely to predominate? Is he framed to believe or framed to doubt? Is he prudent, just, temperate, or the reverse of these? These and such-like questions are not to be crudely and formally proposed, but are to be used with tact; nor should the critic press for hard and definite answers, but know how skillfully to glean its meaning from an evasion. He is a dull cross-examiner who will invariably follow the scheme which he has thought out and prepared beforehand, and who cannot vary his questions to surprise or beguile the truth from an unwilling witness. But the tact which comes from natural gift and from experience may be well supported by something of method,—method well hidden away from the surface and from sight.

This may be termed the psychological method of study. But we may also follow a more objective method. Taking the chief themes with which literature and art are conversant—God, external nature, humanity—we may inquire how our author has dealt with each of these. What is his theology, or his philosophy of the universe? By which we mean no abstract creed or doctrine, but the tides and currents of feeling and of faith, as well as the tendencies and conclusions of the intellect. Under what aspect has this goodly frame of things, in whose midst we are, revealed itself to him? How has he regarded and interpreted the life of man? Under each of these great themes a multitude of subordinate topics are included. And alike in this and in what we have termed the psychological method of study, we shall gain double results if we examine a writer's works in the order of their chronology, and thus become acquainted with the growth and development of his powers, and the widening and deepening of his relations with man, with external nature, and with that Supreme Power, unknown yet well known, of which nature and man are the manifestation. As to the study of an artist's technical qualities, this, by virtue of the fact that he is an artist, is of capital importance; and it may often be associated with the study of that which his technique is employed to express and render—the characteristics of his mind, and of the vision which he has attained of the external universe, of humanity, and of God. Of all our study, the last end and aim should be to ascertain how a great writer or artist has served the life of man; to ascertain this, to bring home to ourselves as large a portion as may be of the gain wherewith he has enriched human life, and to render access to that store of wisdom, passion, and power, easier and surer for others.

A. CONAN DOYLE

(1859–)

The author of ‹The White Company,› ‹The Great Shadow,› and ‹Micah Clarke› has been heard to lament the fact that his introduction to American readers came chiefly through the good offices of his accomplished friend «Sherlock Holmes.» Dr. Doyle would prefer to be judged by his more serious and laborious work, as it appears in his historic romances. But he has found it useless to protest. ‹The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes› delighted a public which enjoys incident, mystery, and above all that matching of the wits of a clever man against the dumb resistance of the secrecy of inanimate things, which results in the triumph of the human intelligence. Moreover, in Sherlock Holmes himself the reader perceived a new character in fiction. The inventors of the French detective story,—that ingenious Chinese puzzle of literature,—have no such wizard as he to show. Even Poe, past master of mystery-making, is more or less empirical in his methods of mystery-solving.

A. Conan Doyle

But Sherlock Holmes is a true product of his time. He is an embodiment of the scientific spirit seeing microscopically and applying itself to construct, from material vestiges and psychologic remainders, an unknown body of proof. From the smallest fragments he deduces the whole structure, precisely as the great naturalists do; and so flawless are his reasonings that a course of ‹The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes› would not be bad training in a high-school class in logic.

The creator of this eminent personage was born in Edinburgh in 1859, of a line of artists; his grandfather, John Doyle, having been a famous political caricaturist, whose works, under the signature «H. B.,» were purchased at a high price by the British Museum. The quaint signature of his father — a capital D, with a little bird perched on top, gained him the affectionate sobriquet of «Dicky Doyle»; and Dicky Doyle's house was the gathering-place of artists and authors, whose talk served to decide the destiny of the lad

Conan. For though he was intended for the medical profession, and after studying in Germany had kept his terms at the Medical College of Edinburgh University, the love of letters drove him forth in his early twenties to try his fortunes in the literary world of London.

Inheriting from his artist ancestry a sense of form and color, a faculty of constructiveness, and a vivid imagination, his studiousness and his industry have turned his capacities into abilities. For his romance of ‹The White Company› he read more than two hundred books, and spent on it more than two years of labor. ‹Micah Clarke› and ‹The Great Shadow› involved equal wit and conscience. In his historic fiction he has described the England of Edward III., of James II., and of to-day, the Scotland of George III., the France of Edward III., of Louis XIV., and of Napoleon, and the America of Frontenac; while, in securing this correctness of historic detail, he has not neglected the first duty of a story-teller, which is to be interesting.

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE

From ‹The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.› Copyright 1892, by Harper & Brothers

I HAD called upon my friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes one day in the autumn of last year, and found him in deep conversation with a very stout, florid-faced elderly gentleman, with fiery red hair. With an apology for my intrusion I was about to withdraw, when Holmes pulled me abruptly into the room and closed the door behind me.

«You could not possibly have come at a better time, my dear Watson,» he said, cordially.

«I was afraid that you were engaged.»

«So I am. Very much so.»

«Then I can wait in the next room.»

«Not at all. This gentleman, Mr. Wilson, has been my partner and helper in many of my most successful cases, and I have no doubt that he will be of the utmost use to me in yours also.»

The stout gentleman half rose from his chair and gave a bob of greeting, with a quick little questioning glance from his small, fat-encircled eyes.

«Try the settee,» said Holmes, relapsing into his arm-chair and putting his finger-tips together, as was his custom when in judicial moods. «I know, my dear Watson, that you share my love of all that is bizarre and outside the conventions and humdrum routine of every-day life. You have shown your relish for it by the enthusiasm which has prompted you to chronicle, and if you will excuse my saying so, somewhat to embellish so many of my own little adventures."

"Your cases have indeed been of the greatest interest to me," I observed.

"You will remember that I remarked the other day, just before we went into the very simple problem presented by Miss Mary Sutherland, that for strange effects and extraordinary combinations we must go to life itself, which is always far more daring than any effort of the imagination."

"A proposition which I took the liberty of doubting."

"You did, doctor; but none the less you must come round to my view, for otherwise I shall keep on piling fact upon fact on you, until your reason breaks down under them and acknowledges me to be right. Now, Mr. Jabez Wilson here has been good enough to call upon me this morning, and to begin a narrative which promises to be one of the most singular which I have listened to for some time. You have heard me remark that the strangest and most unique things are very often connected not with the larger but with the smaller crimes; and occasionally, indeed, where there is room for doubt whether any positive crime has been committed. As far as I have heard, it is impossible for me to say whether the present case is an instance of crime or not; but the course of events is certainly among the most singular that I have ever listened to. Perhaps, Mr. Wilson, you would have the great kindness to recommence your narrative. I ask you, not merely because my friend Dr. Watson has not heard the opening part, but also because the peculiar nature of the story makes me anxious to have every possible detail from your lips. As a rule, when I have heard some slight indication of the course of events, I am able to guide myself by the thousands of other similar cases which occur to my memory. In the present instance I am forced to admit that the facts are, to the best of my belief, unique."

The portly client puffed out his chest with an appearance of some little pride, and pulled a dirty and wrinkled newspaper from the inside pocket of his great-coat. As he glanced down the advertisement column, with his head thrust forward, and the paper flattened out upon his knee, I took a good look at the man, and endeavored, after the fashion of my companion, to read the indications which might be presented by his dress or appearance.

I did not gain very much, however, by my inspection. Our visitor bore every mark of being an average commonplace British tradesman, obese, pompous, and slow. He wore rather baggy gray shepherd's-check trousers, a not over clean black frock-coat unbuttoned in the front, and a drab waistcoat, with a heavy brassy Albert chain and a square pierced bit of metal dangling down as an ornament. A frayed top-hat and a faded brown overcoat with a wrinkled velvet collar lay upon a chair beside him. Altogether, look as I would, there was nothing remarkable about the man save his blazing red head, and the expression of extreme chagrin and discontent upon his features.

Sherlock Holmes's quick eye took in my occupation, and he shook his head with a smile as he noticed my questioning glances. « Beyond the obvious facts that he has at some time done manual labor, that he takes snuff, that he is a Freemason, that he has been in China, and that he has done a considerable amount of writing lately, I can deduce nothing else.»

Mr. Jabez Wilson started up in his chair, with his forefinger upon the paper, but his eyes upon my companion.

« How in the name of good fortune did you know all that, Mr. Holmes?» he asked. « How did you know, for example, that I did manual labor? It's as true as gospel, for I began as a ship's carpenter.»

« Your hands, my dear sir. Your right hand is quite a size larger than your left. You have worked with it, and the muscles are more developed.»

« Well, the snuff, then, and the Freemasonry?»

« I won't insult your intelligence by telling you how I read that; especially as, rather against the strict rules of your order, you use an arc-and-compass breastpin.»

« Ah, of course, I forgot that. But the writing?»

« What else can be indicated by that right cuff so very shiny for five inches, and the left one with the smooth patch near the elbow where you rest it upon the desk?»

« Well, but China?»

« The fish that you have tattooed immediately above your right wrist could only have been done in China. I have made a small study of tattoo marks, and have even contributed to the literature of the subject. That trick of staining the fishes' scales of a delicate pink is quite peculiar to China. When in addition I see a Chinese coin hanging from your watch-chain, the matter becomes even more simple."

Mr. Jabez Wilson laughed heavily. "Well, I never!" said he. "I thought at first that you had done something clever, but I see that there was nothing in it, after all."

"I begin to think, Watson," said Holmes, "that I make a mistake in explaining. 'Omne ignotum pro magnifico,' you know, and my poor little reputation, such as it is, will suffer shipwreck if I am so candid. Can you not find the advertisement, Mr. Wilson?"

"Yes, I have got it now," he answered, with his thick red finger planted half-way down the column. "Here it is. This is what began it all. You just read it for yourself, sir."

I took the paper from him, and read as follows:—

"TO THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE:—On account of the bequest of the late Ezekiah Hopkins, of Lebanon, Pa., U. S. A., there is now another vacancy open, which entitles a member of the League to a salary of £4 a week for purely nominal services. All red-headed men who are sound in body and mind, and above the age of twenty-one years, are eligible. Apply in person on Monday, at eleven o'clock, to Duncan Ross, at the offices of the League, 7 Pope's Court, Fleet Street."

"What on earth does this mean?" I ejaculated, after I had twice read over the extraordinary announcement.

Holmes chuckled, and wriggled in his chair, as was his habit when in high spirits. "It is a little off the beaten track, isn't it?" said he. "And now, Mr. Wilson, off you go at scratch, and tell us all about yourself, your household, and the effect which this advertisement had upon your fortunes. You will first make a note, doctor, of the paper and the date."

"It is the Morning Chronicle of April 27th, 1890. Just two months ago."

"Very good. Now, Mr. Wilson?"

"Well, it is just as I have been telling you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said Jabez Wilson, mopping his forehead: "I have a small pawnbroker's business at Coburg Square, near the city. It's not a very large affair, and of late years it has not done more than just give me a living. I used to be able to keep two assistants, but now I only keep one; and I would have a job to pay him, but that he is willing to come for half wages, so as to learn the business.»

«What is the name of this obliging youth?» asked Sherlock Holmes.

«His name is Vincent Spaulding, and he's not such a youth, either. It's hard to say his age. I should not wish a smarter assistant, Mr. Holmes; and I know very well that he could better himself, and earn twice what I am able to give him. But after all, if he is satisfied, why should I put ideas in his head?»

«Why, indeed? You seem most fortunate in having an *employé* who comes under the full market price. It is not a common experience among employers in this age. I don't know that your assistant is not as remarkable as your advertisement.»

«Oh, he has his faults, too,» said Mr. Wilson. «Never was such a fellow for photography. Snapping away with a camera when he ought to be improving his mind, and then diving down into the cellar like a rabbit into its hole to develop his pictures. That is his main fault; but on the whole, he's a good worker. There's no vice in him.»

«He is still with you, I presume?»

«Yes, sir. He and a girl of fourteen, who does a bit of simple cooking, and keeps the place clean—that's all I have in the house, for I am a widower, and never had any family. We live very quietly, sir, the three of us; and we keep a roof over our heads, and pay our debts, if we do nothing more.

«The first thing that put us out was that advertisement. Spaulding, he came down into the office just this day eight weeks, with this very paper in his hand, and he says:—

«‹I wish to the Lord, Mr. Wilson, that I was a red-headed man.›

«‹Why that?› I asks.

«‹Why,› says he, ‹here's another vacancy on the League of the Red-Headed Men. It's worth quite a little fortune to any man who gets it, and I understand that there are more vacancies than there are men, so that the trustees are at their wits' end what to do with the money. If my hair would only change color, here's a nice little crib all ready for me to step into.›

«‹Why, what is it, then?› I asked. You see, Mr. Holmes, I am a very stay-at-home man, and as my business came to me instead of my having to go to it, I was often weeks on end without putting my foot over the door-mat. In that way I didn't know much of what was going on outside, and I was always glad of a bit of news.

«'Have you never heard of the League of the Red-Headed Men?' he asked, with his eyes open.

«'Never.'

«'Why, I wonder at that, for you are eligible yourself for one of the vacancies.'

«'And what are they worth?' I asked.

«'Oh, merely a couple of hundred a year; but the work is slight, and it need not interfere very much with one's other occupations.'

«Well, you can easily think that that made me prick up my ears, for the business has not been over good for some years, and an extra couple of hundred would have been very handy.

«'Tell me all about it,' said I.

«'Well,' said he, showing me the advertisement, 'you can see for yourself that the League has a vacancy, and there is the address where you should apply for particulars. As far as I can make out, the League was founded by an American millionaire, Ezekiah Hopkins, who was very peculiar in his ways. He was himself red-headed, and he had a great sympathy for all red-headed men; so when he died it was found that he had left his enormous fortune in the hands of trustees, with instructions to apply the interest to the providing of easy berths to men whose hair is of that color. From all I hear, it is splendid pay and very little to do.'

«'But,' said I, 'there would be millions of red-headed men who would apply.'

«'Not so many as you might think,' he answered. 'You see it is really confined to Londoners, and to grown men. This American had started from London when he was young, and he wanted to do the old town a good turn. Then again, I have heard it is no use your applying if your hair is light red, or dark red, or anything but real bright, blazing, fiery red. Now if you care to apply, Mr. Wilson, you would just walk in; but perhaps it would hardly be worth your while to put yourself out of the way for the sake of a few hundred pounds.'

«Now, it is a fact, gentlemen, as you may see for yourselves, that my hair is of a very full and rich tint, so that it seemed to me that if there was to be any competition in the matter, I stood as good a chance as any man that I had ever met. Vincent Spaulding seemed to know so much about it that I thought he might prove useful, so I just ordered him to put up the shutters for the day, and to come right away with me. He was very willing to have a holiday; so we shut the business up, and started off for the address that was given us in the advertisement.

«I never hope to see such a sight as that again, Mr. Holmes. From north, south, east, and west, every man who had a shade of red in his hair had tramped into the city to answer the advertisement. Fleet Street was choked with red-headed folk, and Pope's Court looked like a coster's orange-barrow. I should not have thought there were so many in the whole country as were brought together by that single advertisement. Every shade of color they were — straw, lemon, orange, brick, Irish-setter, liver, clay; but as Spaulding said, there were not many who had the real vivid flame-colored tint. When I saw how many were waiting, I would have given it up in despair; but Spaulding would not hear of it. How he did it I could not imagine, but he pushed and pulled and butted until he got me through the crowd, and right up to the steps which led to the office. There was a double stream upon the stair, some going up in hope, and some coming back dejected; but we wedged in as well as we could, and soon found ourselves in the office.»

«Your experience has been a most entertaining one,» remarked Holmes, as his client paused and refreshed his memory with a huge pinch of snuff. «Pray continue your very interesting statement.»

«There was nothing in the office but a couple of wooden chairs and a deal table, behind which sat a small man, with a head that was even redder than mine. He said a few words to each candidate as he came up, and then he always managed to find some fault in them which would disqualify them. Getting a vacancy did not seem to be such a very easy matter, after all. However, when our turn came, the little man was much more favorable to me than to any of the others, and he closed the door as we entered, so that he might have a private word with us.

«'This is Mr. Jabez Wilson,' said my assistant, 'and he is willing to fill a vacancy in the League.'

«'And he is admirably suited for it,' the other answered. 'He has every requirement. I cannot recall when I have seen anything so fine.' He took a step backward, cocked his head on one side, and gazed at my hair until I felt quite bashful. Then suddenly he plunged forward, wrung my hand, and congratulated me warmly on my success.

“‘It would be injustice to hesitate,’ said he. ‘You will, however, I am sure, excuse me for taking an obvious precaution.’ With that he seized my hair in both his hands, and tugged until I yelled with the pain. ‘There is water in your eyes,’ said he, as he released me. ‘I perceive that all is as it should be. But we have to be careful, for we have twice been deceived by wigs and once by paint. I could tell you tales of cobbler's wax which would disgust you with human nature.’ He stepped over to the window, and shouted through it at the top of his voice that the vacancy was filled. A groan of disappointment came up from below, and the folk all trooped away in different directions, until there was not a red head to be seen except my own and that of the manager.

“‘My name,’ said he, ‘is Mr. Duncan Ross, and I am myself one of the pensioners upon the fund left by our noble benefactor. Are you a married man, Mr. Wilson? Have you a family?’

“I answered that I had not.

“His face fell immediately.

“‘Dear me,’ he said, gravely, ‘that is very serious indeed! I am sorry to hear you say that. The fund was of course for the propagation and spread of the red-heads, as well as for their maintenance. It is exceedingly unfortunate that you should be a bachelor.’

“My face lengthened at this, Mr. Holmes, for I thought that I was not to have the vacancy after all; but after thinking it over for a few minutes, he said that it would be all right.

“‘In the case of another,’ said he, ‘the objection might be fatal, but we must stretch a point in favor of a man with such a head of hair as yours. When shall you be able to enter upon your new duties?’

“‘Well, it is a little awkward, for I have a business already,’ said I.

“‘Oh, never mind about that, Mr. Wilson!’ said Vincent Spaulding. ‘I shall be able to look after that for you.’

“‘What would be the hours?’ I asked.

“‘Ten to two.’

“Now a pawnbroker's business is mostly done of an evening, Mr. Holmes, especially Thursday and Friday evening, which is just before pay-day; so it would suit me very well to earn a little in the mornings. Besides, I knew that my assistant was a good man, and that he would see to anything that turned up.

"'That would suit me very well,' said I. 'And the pay?'

"'Is £4 a week.'

"'And the work?'

"'Is purely nominal.'

"'What do you call purely nominal?'

"'Well, you have to be in the office, or at least in the building, the whole time. If you leave, you forfeit your whole position forever. The will is very clear upon that point. You don't comply with the conditions if you budge from the office during that time.'

"'It's only four hours a day, and I should not think of leaving,' said I.

"'No excuse will avail,' said Mr. Duncan Ross, 'neither sickness nor business nor anything else. There you must stay, or you lose your billet.'

"'And the work?'

"'Is to copy out the Encyclopædia Britannica. There is the first volume of it in that press. You must find your own ink, pens, and blotting-paper, but we provide this table and chair. Will you be ready to-morrow?'

"'Certainly,' I answered.

"'Then good-by, Mr. Jabez Wilson; and let me congratulate you once more on the important position which you have been fortunate enough to gain.' He bowed me out of the room, and I went home with my assistant, hardly knowing what to say or do, I was so pleased at my own good fortune.

"Well, I thought over the matter all day, and by evening I was in low spirits again; for I had quite persuaded myself that the whole affair must be some great hoax or fraud, though what its object might be I could not imagine. It seemed altogether past belief that any one could make such a will, or that they would pay such a sum for doing anything so simple as copying out the 'Encyclopædia Britannica.' Vincent Spaulding did what he could to cheer me up, but by bedtime I had reasoned myself out of the whole thing. However, in the morning I determined to have a look at it anyhow, so I bought a penny bottle of ink, and with a quill pen and seven sheets of foolscap paper I started off for Pope's Court.

"Well, to my surprise and delight, everything was as right as possible. The table was set out ready for me, and Mr. Duncan Ross was there to see that I got fairly to work. He started me off upon the letter A, and then he left me; but he would drop in from time to time to see that all was right with me. At two o'clock he bade me good-by, complimented me upon the amount that I had written, and locked the door of the office after me.

"This went on day after day, Mr. Holmes, and on Saturday the manager came in and planked down four golden sovereigns for my week's work. It was the same next week, and the same the week after. Every morning I was there at ten, and every afternoon I left at two. By degrees Mr. Duncan Ross took to coming in only once of a morning, and then after a time he did not come in at all. Still, of course, I never dared to leave the room for an instant, for I was not sure when he might come, and the billet was such a good one, and suited me so well, that I would not risk the loss of it.

"Eight weeks passed away like this, and I had written about Abbots and Archery and Armor and Architecture and Attica, and hoped with diligence that I might get on to the B's before very long. It cost me something in foolscap, and I had pretty nearly filled a shelf with my writings. And then suddenly the whole business came to an end."

"To an end?"

"Yes, sir. And no later than this morning. I went to my work as usual at ten o'clock, but the door was shut and locked with a little square of card-board hammered on to the middle of the panel with a tack. Here it is, and you can read for yourself."

He held up a piece of white cardboard about the size of a sheet of note-paper. It read in this fashion:—

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE

IS

DISSOLVED.

October 9th, 1890.

Sherlock Holmes and I surveyed this curt announcement and the rueful face behind it, until the comical side of the affair so completely overtopped every other consideration that we both burst out into a roar of laughter.

«I cannot see that there is anything very funny,» cried our client, flushing up to the roots of his flaming head. «If you can do nothing better than laugh at me, I can go elsewhere.»

«No, no,» cried Holmes, shoving him back into the chair from which he had half risen. «I really wouldn't miss your case for the world. It is most refreshingly unusual. But there is, if you will excuse my saying so, something just a little funny about it. Pray, what steps did you take when you found the card upon the door?»

«I was staggered, sir. I did not know what to do. Then I called at the offices round, but none of them seemed to know anything about it. Finally I went to the landlord, who is an accountant living on the ground-floor, and I asked him if he could tell me what had become of the Red-Headed League. He said that he had never heard of any such body. Then I asked him who Mr. Duncan Ross was. He answered that the name was new to him.

«'Well,' said I, 'the gentleman at No. 4.'

«'What, the red-headed man?'

«'Yes.'

«'Oh,' said he, 'his name was William Morris. He was a solicitor, and was using my room as a temporary convenience until his new premises were ready. He moved out yesterday.'

«'Where could I find him?'

«'Oh, at his new offices. He did tell me the address. Yes, 17 King Edward Street, near St. Paul's.'

«I started off, Mr. Holmes, but when I got to that address it was a manufactory of artificial knee-caps, and no one in it had ever heard of either Mr. William Morris or Mr. Duncan Ross.»

«And what did you do then?» asked Holmes.

«I went home to Saxe-Coburg Square, and I took the advice of my assistant. But he could not help me in any way. He could only say that if I waited I should hear by post. But that was not quite good enough, Mr. Holmes. I did not wish to lose such a place without a struggle; so as I had heard that you were good enough to give advice to poor folk who were in need of it, I came right away to you.»

«And you did very wisely,» said Holmes. «Your case is an exceedingly remarkable one, and I shall be happy to look into it. From what you have told me, I think that it is possible that graver issues hang from it than might at first sight appear.»

«Grave enough!» said Mr. Jabez Wilson. «Why, I have lost four pound a week.»

«As far as you are personally concerned,» remarked Holmes, «I do not see that you have any grievance against this extraordinary league. On the contrary, you are, as I understand, richer by some £30, to say nothing of the minute knowledge which you have gained on every subject which comes under the letter A. You have lost nothing by them.»

«No, sir. But I want to find out about them, and who they are, and what their object was in playing this prank — if it was a prank — upon me. It was a pretty expensive joke for them, for it cost them two-and-thirty pounds.»

«We shall endeavor to clear up these points for you. And first one or two questions, Mr. Wilson. This assistant of yours who first called your attention to the advertisement — how long had he been with you?»

«About a month then.»

«How did he come?»

«In answer to an advertisement.»

«Was he the only applicant?»

«No; I had a dozen.»

«Why did you pick him?»

«Because he was handy, and would come cheap.»

«At half wages, in fact.»

«Yes.»

«What is he like, this Vincent Spaulding?»

«Small, stout-built, very quick in his ways, no hair on his face, though he's not short of thirty. Has a white splash of acid upon his forehead.»

Holmes sat up in his chair in considerable excitement. «I thought as much,» said he. «Have you ever observed that his ears are pierced for earrings?»

«Yes, sir. He told me that a gipsy had done it for him when he was a lad.»

«Hum!» said Holmes, sinking back in deep thought. «He is still with you?»

«Oh yes, sir; I have only just left him.»

«And has your business been attended to in your absence?»

«Nothing to complain of, sir. There's never very much to do of a morning.»

«That will do, Mr. Wilson. I shall be happy to give you an opinion upon the subject in the course of a day or two. To-day is Saturday, and I hope that by Monday we may come to a conclusion."

"Well, Watson," said Holmes, when our visitor had left us, "what do you make of it all?"

"I make nothing of it," I answered, frankly. "It is a most mysterious business."

"As a rule," said Holmes, "the more bizarre a thing is, the less mysterious it proves to be. It is your commonplace, featureless crimes which are really puzzling, just as a commonplace face is the most difficult to identify. But I must be prompt over this matter."

"What are you going to do, then?" I asked.

"To smoke," he answered. "It is quite a three-pipe problem, and I beg that you won't speak to me for fifty minutes." He curled himself up in his chair, with his thin knees drawn up to his hawk-like nose, and there he sat with his eyes closed and his black clay pipe thrusting out like the bill of some strange bird. I had come to the conclusion that he had dropped asleep, and indeed was nodding myself, when he suddenly sprang out of his chair with the gesture of a man who has made up his mind, and put his pipe down upon the mantel-piece.

"Sarasate plays at the St. James's Hall this afternoon," he remarked. "What do you think, Watson? Could your patients spare you for a few hours?"

"I have nothing to do to-day. My practice is never very absorbing."

"Then put on your hat and come. I am going through the city first, and we can have some lunch on the way. I observe that there is a good deal of German music on the programme, which is rather more to my taste than Italian or French. It is introspective, and I want to introspect. Come along!"

We traveled by the Underground as far as Aldersgate; and a short walk took us to Saxe-Coburg Square, the scene of the singular story which we had listened to in the morning. It was a poky little shabby-genteel place, where four lines of dingy two-storied brick houses looked out into a small railed-in inclosure, where a lawn of weedy grass and a few clumps of faded laurel-bushes made a hard fight against a smoke-laden and uncongenial atmosphere. Three gilt balls, and a brown board with "JABEZ WILSON" in white letters, upon a corner house, announced the place where our red-headed client carried on his business. Sherlock Holmes stopped in front of it, with his head on one side, and looked it all over, with his eyes shining brightly between puckered lids. Then he walked slowly up the street, and then down again to the corner, still looking keenly at the houses. Finally he returned to the pawnbroker's, and having thumped vigorously upon the pavement with his stick two or three times he went up to the door and knocked. It was instantly opened by a bright-looking, clean-shaven young fellow, who asked him to step in.

«Thank you,» said Holmes, «I only wish to ask you how you would go from here to the Strand.»

«Third right, fourth left,» answered the assistant, promptly, closing the door.

«Smart fellow, that,» observed Holmes, as we walked away. «He is, in my judgment, the fourth smartest man in London, and for daring I am not sure that he has not a claim to be third.. I have known something of him before.»

«Evidently,» said I, «Mr. Wilson's assistant counts for a good deal in this mystery of the Red-Headed League. I am sure that you inquired your way merely in order that you might see him.»

«Not him.»

«What then?»

«The knees of his trousers.»

«And what did you see?»

«What I expected to see.»

«Why did you beat the pavement?»

«My dear doctor, this is a time for observation, not for talk. We are spies in an enemy's country. We know something of Saxe-Coburg Square. Let us now explore the parts which lie behind it.»

The road in which we found ourselves as we turned round the corner from the retired Saxe-Coburg Square presented as great a contrast to it as the front of a picture does to the back. It was one of the main arteries which convey the traffic of the city to the north and west. The roadway was blocked with the immense stream of commerce, flowing in a double tide inward and outward, while the foot-paths were black with the hurrying swarm of pedestrians. It was difficult to realize, as we looked at the line of fine shops and stately business premises, that they really abutted on the other side upon the faded and stagnant square which we had just quitted.

«Let me see,» said Holmes, standing at the corner and glancing along the line, «I should like just to remember the order of the houses here. It is a hobby of mine to have an exact knowledge of London. There is Mortimer's, the tobacconist, the little newspaper shop, the Coburg branch of the City and Suburban Bank, the Vegetarian Restaurant, and McFarlane's carriage-building depot. That carries us right on to the other block. And now, doctor, we've done our work, so it's time we had some play. A sandwich and a cup of coffee, and then off to violin-land, where all is sweetness and delicacy and harmony, and there are no red-headed clients to vex us with their conundrums."

My friend was an enthusiastic musician, being himself not only a very capable performer, but a composer of no ordinary merit. All the afternoon he sat in the stalls wrapped in the most perfect happiness, gently waving his long thin fingers in time to the music, while his gently smiling face and his languid, dreamy eyes were as unlike those of Holmes the sleuth-hound, Holmes the relentless, keen-witted, ready-handed criminal agent, as it was possible to conceive. In his singular character the dual nature alternately asserted itself, and his extreme exactness and astuteness represented, as I have often thought, the reaction against the poetic and contemplative mood which occasionally predominated in him. The swing of his nature took him from extreme languor to devouring energy; and as I knew well, he was never so truly formidable as when for days on end he had been lounging in his arm-chair, amid his improvisations and his black-letter editions. Then it was that the lust of the chase would suddenly come upon him, and that his brilliant reasoning power would rise to the level of intuition, until those who were unacquainted with his methods would look askance at him as on a man whose knowledge was not that of other mortals. When I saw him that afternoon so enwrapped in the music at St. James's Hall, I felt that an evil time might be coming upon those whom he had set himself to hunt down.

"You want to go home, no doubt, doctor," he remarked as we emerged.

"Yes, it would be as well."

"And I have some business to do which will take some hours. This business at Coburg Square is serious."

"Why serious?"

"A considerable crime is in contemplation. I have every reason to believe that we shall be in time to stop it. But to-day being Saturday rather complicates matters. I shall want your help to-night."

«At what time?»

«Ten will be early enough.»

«I shall be at Baker Street at ten.»

«Very well. And I say, doctor, there may be some little danger, so kindly put your army revolver in your pocket.» He waved his hand, turned on his heel, and disappeared in an instant among the crowd.

I trust that I am not more dense than my neighbors, but I was always oppressed with a sense of my own stupidity in my dealings with Sherlock Holmes. Here I had heard what he had heard, I had seen what he had seen, and yet from his words it was evident that he saw clearly not only what had happened, but what was about to happen, while to me the whole business was still confused and grotesque. As I drove home to my house in Kensington I thought over it all, from the extraordinary story of the red-headed copier of the 'Encyclopædia' down to the visit to Saxe-Coburg Square, and the ominous words with which he had parted from me. What was this nocturnal expedition, and why should I go armed? Where were we going, and what were we to do? I had the hint from Holmes that this smooth-faced pawnbroker's assistant was a formidable man—a man who might play a deep game. I tried to puzzle it out, but gave it up in despair, and set the matter aside until night should bring an explanation.

It was a quarter past nine when I started from home and made my way across the Park, and so through Oxford Street to Baker Street. Two hansoms were standing at the door, and as I entered the passage I heard the sound of voices from above. On entering his room I found Holmes in animated conversation with two men, one of whom I recognized as Peter Jones, the official police agent, while the other was a long thin sad-faced man, with a very shiny hat and oppressively respectable frock-coat.

«Ha! our party is complete,» said Holmes, buttoning up his pea-jacket, and taking his heavy hunting crop from the rack. «Watson, I think you know Mr. Jones, of Scotland Yard? Let me introduce you to Mr. Merryweather, who is to be our companion in to-night's adventure.»

«We're hunting in couples again, doctor, you see,» said Jones, in his consequential way. «Our friend here is a wonderful man for starting a chase. All he wants is an old dog to help him to do the running down.»

«I hope a wild goose may not prove to be the end of our chase,» observed Mr. Merryweather, gloomily.

«You may place considerable confidence in Mr. Holmes, sir,» said the police agent, loftily. «He has his own little methods, which are, if he won't mind my saying so, just a little too theoretical and fantastic, but he has the makings of a detective in him. It is not too much to say that once or twice, as in that business of the Sholto murder and the Agra treasure, he has been more nearly correct than the official force.»

«Oh, if you say so, Mr. Jones, it is all right,» said the stranger, with deference. «Still, I confess that I miss my rubber. It is the first Saturday night for seven-and-twenty years that I have not had my rubber.»

«I think you will find,» said Sherlock Holmes, «that you will play for a higher stake to-night than you have ever done yet, and that the play will be more exciting. For you, Mr. Merryweather, the stake will be some £30,000; and for you, Jones, it will be the man upon whom you wish to lay your hands.»

«John Clay, the murderer, thief, smasher, and forger. He's a young man, Mr. Merryweather, but he is at the head of his profession, and I would rather have my bracelets on him than on any criminal in London. He's a remarkable man, is young John Clay. His grandfather was a royal duke, and he himself has been to Eton and Oxford. His brain is as cunning as his fingers, and though we meet signs of him at every turn, we never know where to find the man himself. He'll crack a crib in Scotland one week, and be raising money to build an orphanage in Cornwall the next. I've been on his track for years, and have never set eyes on him yet.»

«I hope that I may have the pleasure of introducing you to-night. I've had one or two little turns also with Mr. John Clay, and I agree with you that he is at the head of his profession. It is past ten, however, and quite time that we started. If you two will take the first hansom, Watson and I will follow in the second.»

Sherlock Holmes was not very communicative during the long drive, and lay back in the cab humming the tunes which he had heard in the afternoon. We rattled through an endless labyrinth of gas-lit streets until we emerged into Farringdon Street.

«We are close there now,» my friend remarked. «This fellow Merryweather is a bank director, and personally interested in the matter. I thought it as well to have Jones with us also. He is not a bad fellow, though an absolute imbecile in his profession. He has one positive virtue. He is as brave as a bull-dog, and as tenacious as a lobster if he gets his claws upon any one. Here we are, and they are waiting for us."

We had reached the same crowded thoroughfare in which we had found ourselves in the morning. Our cabs were dismissed, and following the guidance of Mr. Merryweather, we passed down a narrow passage and through a side door, which he opened for us. Within, there was a small corridor, which ended in a very massive iron gate. This also was opened, and led down a flight of winding stone steps, which terminated at another formidable gate. Mr. Merryweather stopped to light a lantern, and then conducted us down a dark, earth-smelling passage, and so, after opening a third door, into a huge vault or cellar, which was piled all around with crates and massive boxes.

"You are not very vulnerable from above," Holmes remarked, as he held up the lantern and gazed about him.

"Nor from below," said Mr. Merryweather, striking his stick upon the flags which lined the floor. "Why, dear me, it sounds quite hollow!" he remarked, looking up in surprise.

"I must really ask you to be a little more quiet," said Holmes, severely. "You have already imperiled the whole success of our expedition. Might I beg that you would have the goodness to sit down upon one of those boxes, and not to interfere?"

The solemn Mr. Merryweather perched himself upon a crate, with a very injured expression upon his face, while Holmes fell upon his knees upon the floor, and with the lantern and a magnifying lens began to examine minutely the cracks between the stones. A few seconds sufficed to satisfy him, for he sprang to his feet again, and put his glass in his pocket.

"We have at least an hour before us," he remarked; "for they can hardly take any steps until the good pawnbroker is safely in bed. Then they will not lose a minute, for the sooner they do their work the longer time they will have for their escape. We are at present, doctor—as no doubt you have divined—in the cellar at the City branch of one of the principal London banks. Mr. Merryweather is the chairman of directors, and he will explain to you that there are reasons why the more daring criminals of London should take a considerable interest in this cellar at present."

«It is our French gold,» whispered the director. «We have had several warnings that an attempt might be made upon it.»

«Your French gold?»

«Yes. We had occasion some months ago to strengthen our resources, and borrowed for that purpose 30,000 napoleons from the Bank of France. It has become known that we have never had occasion to unpack the money, and that it is still lying in our cellar. The crate upon which I sit contains 2,000 napoleons packed between layers of lead foil. Our reserve of bullion is much larger at present than is usually kept in a single branch office, and the directors have had misgivings upon the subject.»

«Which were very well justified,» observed Holmes. «And now it is time that we arranged our little plans. I expect that within an hour matters will come to a head. In the mean time, Mr. Merryweather, we must put the screen over that dark lantern.»

«And sit in the dark?»

«I am afraid so. I had brought a pack of cards in my pocket, and I thought that, as we were a *partie carrée*, you might have your rubber after all. But I see that the enemy's preparations have gone so far that we cannot risk the presence of a light. And first of all, we must choose our positions. These are daring men, and though we shall take them at a disadvantage, they may do us some harm unless we are careful. I shall stand behind this crate, and do you conceal yourselves behind those. Then when I flash a light upon them, close in swiftly. If they fire, Watson, have no compunction about shooting them down.»

I placed my revolver, cocked, upon the top of the wooden case behind which I crouched. Holmes shot the slide across the front of his lantern, and left us in pitch darkness — such an absolute darkness as I had never before experienced. The smell of hot metal remained to assure us that the light was still there, ready to flash out at a moment's notice. To me, with my nerves worked up to a pitch of expectancy, there was something depressing and subduing in the sudden gloom, and in the cold dank air of the vault.

«They have but one retreat,» whispered Holmes. «That is back through the house into Saxe-Coburg Square. I hope that you have done what I asked you, Jones?»

«I have an inspector and two officers waiting at the front door.»

« Then we have stopped all the holes. And now we must be silent and wait.»

What a time it seemed! From comparing notes afterwards it was but an hour and a quarter, yet it appeared to me that the night must have almost gone, and the dawn be breaking above us. My limbs were weary and stiff, for I feared to change my position; yet my nerves were worked up to the highest pitch of tension, and my hearing was so acute that I could not only hear the gentle breathing of my companions, but I could distinguish the deeper, heavier in-breath of the bulky Jones from the thin, sighing note of the bank director. From my position I could look over the case in the direction of the floor. Suddenly my eyes caught the glint of a light.

At first it was but a lurid spark upon the stone pavement. Then it lengthened out until it became a yellow line, and then, without any warning or sound, a gash seemed to open and a hand appeared; a white, almost womanly hand, which felt about in the centre of the little area of light. For a minute or more the hand, with its writhing fingers, protruded out of the floor. Then it was withdrawn as suddenly as it appeared, and all was dark again save the single lurid spark which marked a chink between the stones.

Its disappearance, however, was but momentary. With a rending, tearing sound, one of the broad white stones turned over upon its side, and left a square gaping hole, through which streamed the light of a lantern. Over the edge there peeped a clean-cut, boyish face, which looked keenly about it, and then, with a hand on either side of the aperture, drew itself shoulder-high and waist-high, until one knee rested upon the edge. In another instant he stood at the side of the hole, and was hauling after him a companion, lithe and small like himself, with a pale face and a shock of very red hair.

« It's all clear,» he whispered. « Have you the chisel and the bags?—Great Scott! Jump, Archie, jump, and I'll swing for it!»

Sherlock Holmes had sprung out and seized the intruder by the collar. The other dived down the hole, and I heard the sound of rending cloth as Jones clutched at his skirts. The light flashed upon the barrel of a revolver, but Holmes's hunting crop came down on the man's wrist and the pistol clinked upon the stone floor.

«It's no use, John Clay,» said Holmes, blandly. «You have no chance at all.»

«So I see,» the other answered, with the utmost coolness. «I fancy that my pal is all right, though I see you have got his coat-tails.»

«There are three men waiting for him at the door,» said Holmes.

«Oh, indeed! You seem to have done the thing very completely. I must compliment you.»

«And I you,» Holmes answered. «Your red-headed idea was very new and effective.»

«You'll see your pal again presently,» said Jones. «He's quicker at climbing down holes than I am. Just hold out, while I fix the derbies.»

«I beg that you will not touch me with your filthy hands,» remarked our prisoner, as the handcuffs clattered upon his wrists. «You may not be aware that I have royal blood in my veins. Have the goodness, also, when you address me always to say ‹sir› and ‹please.›»

«All right,» said Jones, with a stare and a snigger. «Well, would you please, sir, march upstairs, where we can get a cab to carry your Highness to the police station?»

«That is better,» said John Clay, serenely. He made a sweeping bow to the three of us, and walked quietly off in the custody of the detective.

«Really, Mr. Holmes,» said Mr. Merryweather, as we followed them from the cellar, «I do not know how the bank can thank you or repay you. There is no doubt that you have detected and defeated in the most complete manner one of the most determined attempts at bank robbery that have ever come within my experience.»

«I have had one or two little scores of my own to settle with Mr. John Clay,» said Holmes. «I have been at some small expense over this matter, which I shall expect the bank to refund; but beyond that I am amply repaid by having had an experience which is in many ways unique, and by hearing the very remarkable narrative of the Red-Headed League.»

«You see, Watson,» he explained, in the early hours of the morning, as we sat over a glass of whisky and soda in Baker Street, «it was perfectly obvious from the first that the only possible object of this rather fantastic business of the advertisement of the League, and the copying of the 'Encyclopædia,' must be to get this not over bright pawnbroker out of the way for a number of hours every day. It was a curious way of managing it, but really, it would be difficult to suggest a better. The method was no doubt suggested to Clay's ingenious mind by the color of his accomplice's hair. The £4 a week was a lure which must draw him,—and what was it to them, who were playing for thousands? They put in the advertisement, one rogue has the temporary office, the other rogue incites the man to apply for it, and together they manage to secure his absence every morning in the week. From the time that I heard of the assistant having come for half wages, it was obvious to me that he had some strong motive for securing the situation."

"But how could you guess what the motive was?"

"Had there been women in the house, I should have suspected a mere vulgar intrigue. That however was out of the question. The man's business was a small one, and there was nothing in his house which could account for such elaborate preparations and such an expenditure as they were at. It must then be something out of the house. What could it be? I thought of the assistant's fondness for photography, and his trick of vanishing into the cellar. The cellar! There was the end of this tangled clue. Then I made inquiries as to this mysterious assistant, and found that I had to deal with one of the coolest and most daring criminals in London. He was doing something in the cellar—something which took many hours a day for months on end. What could it be, once more? I could think of nothing save that he was running a tunnel to some other building.

"So far I had got when we went to visit the scene of action. I surprised you by beating upon the pavement with my stick. I was ascertaining whether the cellar stretched out in front or behind. It was not in front. Then I rang the bell, and as I hoped, the assistant answered it. We have had some skirmishes, but we had never set eyes upon each other before. I hardly looked at his face. His knees were what I wished to see. You must yourself have remarked how worn, wrinkled, and stained they were. They spoke of those hours of burrowing. The only remaining point was what they were burrowing for. I walked round the corner, saw that the City and Suburban Bank abutted on our friend's premises, and felt that I had solved my problem. When you drove home after the concert I called upon Scotland Yard, and upon the chairman of the bank directors, with the result that you have seen."

"And how could you tell that they would make their attempt to-night?" I asked.

"Well, when they closed their League offices, that was a sign that they cared no longer about Mr. Jabez Wilson's presence—in other words, that they had completed their tunnel. But it was essential that they should use it soon, as it might be discovered, or the bullion might be removed. Saturday would suit them better than any other day, as it would give them two days for their escape. For all these reasons I expected them to come to-night."

"You reasoned it out beautifully," I exclaimed, in unfeigned admiration. "It is so long a chain, and yet every link rings true."

"It saved me from ennui," he answered, yawning. "Alas! I already feel it closing in upon me. My life is spent in one long effort to escape from the commonplaces of existence. These little problems help me to do so."

"And you are a benefactor of the race," said I.

He shrugged his shoulders. "Well, perhaps after all it is of some little use," he remarked. "'L'homme c'est rien—l'œuvre c'est tout,' as Gustave Flaubert wrote to George Sand."

THE BOWMEN'S SONG

From 'The White Company'

What of the bow?
The bow was made in England:
Of true wood, of yew wood,
The wood of English bows;
So men who are free
Love the old yew-tree
And the land where the yew-tree grows.

What of the cord?
The cord was made in England:
A rough cord, a tough cord,
A cord that bowmen love;

So we'll drain our jacks
To the English flax
And the land where the hemp was wove.

What of the shaft?
The shaft was cut in England:
A long shaft, a strong shaft,
Barbed and trim and true;
So we'll drink all together
To the gray goose feather,
And the land where the gray goose flew.

What of the men?
The men were bred in England:
The bowman — the yeoman —
The lads of dale and fell.
Here's to you — and to you!
To the hearts that are true
And the land where the true hearts dwell.

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HOLGER DRACHMANN

(1846–)

HOLGER DRACHMANN, born in Copenhagen October 9th, 1846, belongs to the writers characterized by Georg Brandes as «the men of the new era.»

Danish literature had stood high during the first half of the nineteenth century. In 1850 Oehlenschläger died. In 1870 there was practically no Danish literature. The reason for this may have been that after the new political life of 1848–9 and the granting of the Danish Constitution, politics absorbed all young talent, and men of literary tastes put themselves at the service of the daily press.

HOLGER DRACHMANN

In 1872 Georg Brandes gave his lectures on 'Main Currents in the Literature of the Nineteenth Century' at the University of Copenhagen. That same year Drachmann published his first collection of 'Poems,' and so began his extraordinary productivity of poems, dramas, and novels. Of these, his lyric poems are undoubtedly of the greatest value. His is a distinctly lyric temperament. The new school had chosen for its guide Brandes's teaching that «Literature, to be of significance, should discuss problems.» In view of this fact it is somewhat hard to understand why Drachmann should be called a man of the new era. He never discusses problems. He always gives himself up unreservedly to the subject which at that special moment claims his sympathy. Taken as a whole, therefore, his writings present a certain inconsistency. He has shown himself alternately as socialist and royalist, realist and romanticist, freethinker and believer, cosmopolitan and national, according to the lyric enthusiasm of the moment. Independent of these changes, the one thing to be admired and enjoyed is his lyric feeling and the often exquisite form in which he presents it. His larger compositions, novels, and dramas do not show the same power over his subject.

If Drachmann discusses any problem, it is the problem Drachmann. He does this sometimes with what Brandes calls «a light and joking self-irony,» in a most sympathetic way. Brandes quotes one of Drachmann's early stories, where it is said of the hero:—«His name was really Palnatoke Olsen; a continually repeated discord of two tones, as he used to say.» Olsen is one of the most commonplace Danish names. Palnatoke is the name of one of the fiercest warriors of heathen antiquity, who, like a veritable Valhalla god, dared to oppose the terrible Danish king Harald Blaatand. When Olsen's parents gave him this name they unwittingly described their son, «forever drawn by two poles: one the plain Olsen, the other the hot-headed fiery Viking.» With this in mind, and considering Drachmann's literary works as a whole, one is irresistibly reminded of his friend and contemporary in Norway, Björnsterne Björnson. There is this difference between them, however, that if the irony of Palnatoke Olsen may be applied to both, one might for Drachmann use the abbreviation P. Olsen and for Björnson undoubtedly Palnatoke O.

It might be said of Drachmann, as Sauer said of the Italian poet Monti:—«Like a master in the art of appreciation, he knew how to give himself up to great time-stirring ideas; somewhat as a gifted actor throws himself into his part, with the full strength of his art, with an enthusiasm carrying all before it, and in the most expressive way; then when the part is played, lays it quietly aside and takes hold of something else.»

When a young man, Drachmann studied at the Academy of Arts in Copenhagen, and met with considerable success as a marine painter. His love for the Northern seas shows itself in his poetry and prose, and his descriptions of the sea and the life of the sailor and fisherman are of the truest and best yielded by his pen. He is the author of no less than forty-six volumes of poems, dramas, novels, short stories, and sketches, and of two unpublished dramas. His most important work is 'Forskrevet' (Condemned), which is largely autobiographical; his most attractive though not his strongest production is the opera 'Der Var Engang' (Once Upon a Time), founded on Andersen's 'The Swineherd,' with music by Sange Müller; his best poems and tales are those dealing with the sea.

At present he lives in Hamburg, where on October 10th, 1896, he celebrated his fiftieth birthday and his twenty-fifth «Author-Jubilee,» as the Danes call it. Among the features of the celebration were the sending of an enormous number of telegrams from Drachmann's admirers in Europe and America, and the performance of two of his plays,—one at the Royal Theatre in Copenhagen, the other at the Stadt Theatre in Altona.

THE SKIPPER AND HIS SHIP

From ‹Paul and Virginia of a Northern Zone›: copyright 1895, by Way and Williams, Chicago

The Anna Dorothea, in the North Sea, was pounding along under shortened sail. The weather was thick, the air dense; there was a falling barometer.

It had been a short trip this time. Leroy and Sons, wine merchants of Havre, had made better offers than the old houses in Bordeaux. At each one of his later trips, Captain Spang had said it should be his last. He would «lay up» at home; he was growing too stout and clumsy for the sea, and now he must trust fully to Tönnes, his first mate. The captain's big broad face was flushed as usual; he always looked as if he were illuminated by a setting October sun; there was no change here—rather, the sunset tint was stronger. But Tönnes noted how the features, which he knew best in moments of simple good-nature and of sullen tumult, had gradually relaxed. He thought that it would indeed soon be time for his old skipper to «lay up»; yet perhaps a few trips might still be made.

«Holloa, Tönnes! let her go about before the next squall strikes her. She lies too dead on this bow.»

The skipper had raised his head above the cabin stairs. As usual, he was in his shirt-sleeves, and his scanty hair fluttered in the wind. When he had warned his mate, he again disappeared in the cabin.

Tönnes gave the order to the man at the helm, and hurried to help at the main-braces. The double-reefed main-topsail swung about, the Anna Dorothea caught the wind somewhat sluggishly, and not without getting considerable water over her; then followed the fore-topsail, the reefed foresail, and the trysail. When the tacking was finished and the sails had again caught the wind, the trysail was torn from the boltropes with a loud crack.

The captain's head appeared again.

«We must close-reef!» said he.

The last reef was taken in; the storm came down and lashed the sea; the sky grew more and more threatening; the waves dashed over the deck at each plunge of the old bark in the sea. The old vessel, which had carried her captain for a generation, lay heavily on the water—Tönnes thought too heavily.

The second mate — the same who had played the accordion at the inn — came over to Tönnes.

« It was wrong to stow the china-clay at the bottom and the casks on top; she lies horribly dead, and I'm afraid we shall have to use the pumps.»

« Yes, I said so to the old man, but he would have it that way,» answered Tönnes. « We shall have a wet night.»

« We shall, surely,» said the second mate.

Tönnes crawled up to the helm and looked at the compass. Two men were at the helm — lashed fast. Tönnes looked up into the rigging and out to windward; then suddenly he cried, with the full force of his lungs: —

« Look out for breakers! »

Tönnes himself helped at the wheel; but the vessel only half answered the helm. The greater portion of the sea struck the bow, the quarter, and the bulwarks and stanchions amidship, so that they creaked and groaned. One of the men at the helm had grasped Tönnes, who would otherwise have been swept into the lee scupper. When the ship had righted from the terrible blow, the captain stood on the deck in his oilcloth suit.

« Are any men missing? » cried he, through the howling of the wind and the roaring of the water streaming fore and aft, unable to escape quickly enough through the scuppers.

The storm raged with undiminished fury. The crew — and amongst them Prussian, who had been promoted to be ship's-dog — by-and-by dived forward through the seething salt water and the fragments of wreck that covered the deck.

Now it was that the second mate was missing.

The captain looked at Tönnes, and then out on the wild sea. He scarcely glanced at the crushed long-boat; even if a boat could have been launched, it would have been too late. Tönnes and his skipper were fearless men, who took things as they were. If any help could have been given, they would have given it. But their eyes sought vainly for any dark speck amidst the foaming waves — and it was necessary to care for themselves, the vessel and the crew.

« God save his soul! » murmured Captain Spang.

Tönnes passed his hand across his brow, and went to his duty.

Evening set in; the wind increased rather than decreased.

« She is taking in water,» said the captain, who had sounded the pumps.

Tönnes assented.

«We must change her course,» said the captain. «She pitches too heavily in this sea.»

The bark was held up to the wind as closely as possible. The pumps were worked steadily, but often got out of order on account of the china-clay, which mixed with the water down in the hold.

It was plain that the vessel grew heavier and heavier; her movements in climbing a wave were more and more dead.

During the night a cry arose: again one of the crew was washed overboard.

It was a long night and a wet one, as Tönnes had predicted. Several times the skipper dived down into the cabin — Tönnes knew perfectly well what for, but he said nothing. Few words were spoken on board the Anna Dorothea that night.

In the morning the captain, returning from one of his excursions down below, declared that the cabin was half full of water.

«We must watch for a sail,» he said, abruptly and somewhat huskily.

Tönnes passed the word round amongst the crew. One might read on their faces that they were prepared for this, and that they had ceased to hope, although they had not stopped work at the pumps.

The whole of the weather bulwark, the cook's cabin and the long-boat, were crushed or washed away; the water could be heard below the hatches. While keeping a sharp lookout for sails, many an eye glanced at the yawl as the last resort. But on board Captain Spang's vessel the words were not yet spoken which carried with them the doom of the ship: «We are sinking!»

In the gray-white of the dawn a signal was to be hoisted; the bunting was tied together at the middle and raised half-mast high.

Both the captain and Tönnes had lashed themselves aft; for now the bark was but little better than a wreck, over which the billows broke incessantly, as the vessel, reeling like a drunken man, exposed herself to the violent attacks of the sea instead of parrying them.

«A sail to windward, captain!» cried Tönnes.

Captain Spang only nodded.

«She holds her course!» cried one of the crew excitedly.

«No,» said Tönnes, quietly. «She has seen us, and is bearing down upon us!»

The captain again nodded.

«'Tis a brig!» cried one of the crew.

«A schooner-brig!» Tönnes corrected. «She carries her sails finely. I am sure she is a fruit-trader.»

At last the strange vessel was so near that they could see her deck each time she was thrown upon her side in the violent seething sea.

«Yes, 'tis the schooner-brig!» exclaimed Tönnes. «Do you remember, captain, the time when—»

Again Captain Spang nodded. He acted strangely. Tönnes looked sharply at him, and shook his head.

Now Tönnes hailed the vessel:—

«Help us!—We are sinking!»

At this moment two or three of the bark's crew rushed toward the yawl, although Tönnes warned them back.

Captain Spang seemed changed. Evidently some opposing feelings contended within him. Seeing the insubordination of the men, he only shrugged his shoulders, and let Tönnes take full charge.

The men were in the yawl, still hanging under the iron davits. Now they cut the ropes; the yawl touched the water. The crew of the other vessel gestured warningly; but it was too late. A sea seized the yawl with its small crew, and the next moment crushed it against the main chains of the bark. Their shipmates raised a cry, and rushed to help them; but help was impossible. Boat and crew had disappeared.

«Didn't I say so?» cried Tönnes, with flaming eyes.

Over there in the schooner-brig all was activity. From the Anna Dorothea they could plainly see how the captain gave his orders. He manœuvred his vessel like a true sailor. To board the wreck in such a sea would be madness. Therefore they unreeved two long lines and attached them to the long-boat, one on each side. Then they laid breeching under the boat, and hauled it up amidships by means of tackle. Taking advantage of a moment when their vessel was athwart the seas, they unloosed the tackle, and the boat swung out over the side; then they cut the breeching, the boat fell on the water aft, and now both lines were eased off quickly; while the brig caught the wind, the boat drifted toward the stern-sheets of the bark.

Tönnes was ready with a boat-hook, and connections were quickly made between the boat and the wreck.

«Quick now!» cried Tönnes. «Every man in the boat. No one takes his clothes with him! We may be thankful if we save our lives.»

The men were quickly over the stern-sheets and down in the boat. Prussian whined, and kept close to Captain Spang, who had not moved one step on the deck.

«Come, captain!» cried Tönnes, taking the skipper by the arm.

«What's the matter?» asked the old man angrily.

Tönnes looked at him. Prussian barked.

«We must get into the boat, captain. The vessel may sink at any moment. Come!»

The captain pressed his sou'wester down over his forehead, and glanced around his deck.

The men in the boat cried out to them to come.

«Well!» said Captain Spang, but with an air so absent-minded and a bearing so irresolute that Tönnes at last took a firm hold on him.

Prussian showed his teeth at his former master.

«You go first!» exclaimed Tönnes, snatching the dog and throwing him down to the men, who were having hard work to keep the boat from wrecking.

When the dog was no longer on the deck, it seemed as if Captain Spang's resistance was broken. Tönnes did not let go his hold on him; but the young mate had to use almost superhuman strength to get the heavy old man down over the vessel's side and placed on a seat in the boat.

As soon as they had observed from the brig that this had been done, they hauled in both lines. The boat moved back again; but it was a dangerous voyage, and all were obliged to lash themselves fast to the thwarts with ropes placed there for that purpose.

Captain Spang was like a child. Tönnes had to lash him to the seat. The old man sat with his face hidden in his hands, his back turned toward his ship, inactive, and seemingly unconscious of what took place around him.

At last, when after a hard struggle all were on the deck of the schooner-brig, her captain came forward, placed his hand on his old friend's shoulder, and said:—

«It is the second time, you see! Well, we all cling to life, and the vessel over there is pretty old.»

Captain Spang started. He scarcely returned his friend's hand-shaking.

« My vessel, I say! My papers! All that I have is in the vessel. I must go aboard, do you hear? I must go aboard. How could I forget? »

The other skipper and Tönnes looked at each other.

Captain Spang wrung his hands and stamped on the deck, his eyes fixed on his sinking vessel. She was still afloat; what did he care for the gale and the heavy sea? He belonged to the old school of skippers; he was bound to his vessel by ties longer than any life-line, heavier than any hawser: he had left his ship in a bewildered state, and had taken nothing with him that might serve to prove what he possessed and how long he had possessed it. His good old vessel was still floating on the water. He must, he would go there; if nobody would go with him, he would go alone.

All remonstrances were in vain.

Tönnes pressed the other skipper's hand.

« There is nothing else to be done. I know him," said he.

« So do I," was the answer.

Captain Spang and his mate were again in the boat. As they were on the point of starting, a loud whine and violent barking sounded from the deck, and Prussian showed his one eye over the railing.

« Stay where you are! » cried Tönnes. « We shall be back soon. »

But the dog did not understand him. Perhaps he had his doubts; no one can say. He sprang overboard; Tönnes seized him by the ear, and hauled him into the boat.

And then the two men and the dog ventured back to the abandoned vessel.

This time the old man climbed on board without assistance.

Prussian whined in the boat.

« Throw that dog up to me! » cried the master.

Tönnes did so.

« Shall I come up and help you? » he called out.

« No, I can find my own way. »

« But hurry, captain! do you understand? » said Tönnes, who anxiously noticed that the motions of the vessel were becoming more and more dangerous, while he needed all his strength to keep the boat clear of the wreck.

An answer came from the bark, but he could not catch it. In this moment Tönnes recalled the day when he rowed the captain out on the bay to the brig. His next thought was of Nanna. Oh, if she knew where they were!

And at this thought the mate's breast was filled with conflicting emotions. The dear blessed girl!—Oh, if her father would only come!

«Captain!» cried Tönnes; «Captain Spang! for God's sake, come! Leave those papers alone. The vessel is sinking. We may at any moment—»

He paused.

The captain stood at the stern-sheets. At his side was Prussian, squinting down into the boat. There was an entirely strange expression in Andreas Spang's face; a double expression—one moment hard and defiant, the next almost solemn.

The sou'wester had fallen from his old head. His scanty hairs fluttered in the wind. He held in his hand a parcel of papers and a coil of rope. He pointed toward the brig.

«There!» he cried, throwing the package and the rope down to Tönnes. «Give the skipper this new line for his trouble. He has used plenty of rope for us. You go back. I stay here. Give—my—love—to the girl at home.—You and she—You two—God bless you!»

«Captain!» cried Tönnes in affright; «you are sick; come, let me—»

He prepared to climb on board.

Captain Spang lifted his hand threateningly, and Prussian barked furiously.

«Stay down there, boy, I say! The vessel and I, we belong together. You shall take care of the girl. Good-by!»

The Anna Dorothea rolled heavily over on one side, righted again, and then began to plunge her head downwards, like a whale that, tired of the surface, seeks rest at the bottom. The crew of the brig hauled in the lines of the boat. Tossed on the turbid sea, Tönnes saw his old skipper leaning against the helm, the dog at his side. His gray hairs fluttered in the wind as if they wafted a last farewell; and down with vessel and dog went the old skipper—down into the wild sea that so long had borne him on its waves.

THE PRINCE'S SONG

From ‹Once Upon a Time›

PRINCESS, I come from out a land that lieth —
I know not in what arctic latitude:
Though high in the bleak north, it never sigheth
For sunny smiles; they wait not to be wooed.
Our privilege we know: the bright half-year
Illumines sea and shore with sunlit glory;
In twilight then our fertile fields we ear,
And round our brows we twine a wreath of story.

When winter decks with frost the bearded oak,
In songs and sagas we our youth recover;
Around the hearthstone crowd the listening folk,
While on the wall mysterious shadows hover.
The summer night, suffused with loving glow,
The future, dawning in a golden chalice,
Enkindles hope in hearts of high and low,
From peasant's cottage to the royal palace.

The snow of winter spreads o'er hill and valley
Its soft and silken blue-white veil of sleep;
The springtime bids the green-clad earth to rally,
When through the budding leaves the sunbeams peep.
The autumn brings fresh breezes from the ocean
And paints the lad's fair cheeks a rosy red;
The maiden's heart is stirred with new emotion,
When summer's fragrance o'er the world is spread.

To roam in our fair land is like a dream,
Through these still woods, renowned in ancient story,
Along the shores, deep-mirrored in the gleam
Of fjords that shine beneath the sky's blue glory.
Upon the meadows where the flowers bloom
The elfin maidens hide themselves in slumbers,
But soon along the lakes where shadows gloom
In every bosky nook they'll dance their numbers.

There are no frowning crags on our green mountains,
No dark, forbidding cliffs where gorges yawn;
The streams flow gently seaward from their fountains,
As through the silent valley steals the dawn.

Here nature smoothes the rugged, tames the savage,
And men born here in victory are kind,
Forbearing still the foeman's land to ravage,
And in defeat they bear a steadfast mind.

I'm proud of land, of kindred, and of nation,
I'm proud my home is where the waters flow;
Afar I see in golden radiation
My native land like sun through amber glow.
Its warmth revives my heart, however lonely:
Forgive me, Princess, if my soul's aflame,—
But rather be at home, a beggar only,
Than, exiled thence, have universal fame.

Translation of Charles Harvey Genung.

JOSEPH RODMAN DRAKE

(1795–1820)

Conspicuous among the young poets, essayists, and journalists, who made up literary New York in the early part of the century, was Joseph Rodman Drake, the friend of Halleck, and the best beloved perhaps of all that brilliant group. Hardly known to this generation save by 'The Culprit Fay' and 'The American Flag,' Drake was essentially a true poet and a man of letters. His work was characteristic of his day. He had a certain amount of classical knowledge, a certain eighteenth-century grace and style, yet withal, an instinctive Americanism which flowered out into our first true national literature. The group of writers among whom were found Irving, Halleck, Willis, Dana, Hoffman, Verplanck, Brockden Brown, and a score of others, reflected that age in which they sought their literary models. With the exception of Poe, who belonged to a somewhat later time and whose genius was purely subjective, much of the production of these Americans followed the lines of their English predecessors,—Johnson, Goldsmith, Addison, and Steele. It is only in their deeper moments of thought and feeling that there sounds that note of love of country, of genuine Americanism, which gives their work individuality, and which will keep their memory green.

Joseph Rodman Drake

Drake was born in New York, in August 1795. He was descended from the same family as the great admiral of Elizabethan days, the American branch of which had served their country honorably both in colonial and Revolutionary times. The scenes of his boyhood were the same as those that formed the environment of Irving, memories of which are scattered thick through the literature of the day. New York was still a picturesque, hospitable, rural capital, the centre of the present town being miles distant in the country. The best families were all intimately associated in a social life that was cultivated and refined at the same time that it was gay and unconventional; and in this society Drake occupied a place which his lovable qualities and fine talents must have won, even had it been denied him by birth. He was a precocious boy, for whom a career was anticipated by his friends while he was yet a mere child; and when he met Halleck, in his eighteenth year, he had already won some reputation.

The friendship of Drake and Halleck was destined to prove infinitely valuable to both. A discussion between Cooper, Halleck, and Drake, upon the poetic inspiration of American scenery, prompted Drake to write ‹The Culprit Fay›—a poem without any human character. This he completed in three days, and offered it as the argument on his side. The scene of the poem is laid in the Highlands of the Hudson, but Drake added many pictures suggested by memories of Long Island Sound, whose waters he haunted with boat and rod. He apologized for this by saying that the purposes of poetry alone could explain the presence so far up the Hudson of so many salt-water emigrants. ‹The Culprit Fay› is a creation of pure fancy, full of delicate imagery, and handled with an ethereal lightness of touch. Its exquisite grace, its delicate coloring, its prodigality of charm, explain its immediate popularity and its lasting fame. But the Rip Van Winkle legend is a far more genuine product of fancy.

Drake's few shorter lyrics throb with genuine poetic feeling, and show the loss sustained by literature in the author's early death. Best known of these is ‹The American Flag,› which appeared in the Evening Post as one of a series of *jeux d'esprit*, the joint productions of Halleck and Drake, who either alternated in the composition of the numbers or wrote them together. The last four lines only of ‹The American Flag› are Halleck's. The entire series appeared between March and July, 1819, under the signature of «The Croakers.» Literary New York was mystified as to the authorship of these skits, which hit off the popular fads, follies, and enthusiasms of the day with so easy and graceful a touch. Politics, music, the drama, and domestic life alike furnished inspiration for the numbers; some of whose titles, as ‹A Sketch of a Debate in Tammany› and ‹The Battery War,› suggest the local political issues of the present day. There is now in existence a handsome edition of these verses, with the names of the authors of the several pieces appended, and in the case of the joint ownership with the initials D. and H. subscribed.

Drake's complete poems were not published during his lifetime. Sixteen years after his death by consumption in his twenty-sixth year, his daughter issued a volume dedicated to Halleck, in which were included the best specimens of her father's work. Many of the lesser known verses indicate his true place as a poet. In the touching poem ‹Abelard to Eloise,› in the third stanza of ‹The American Flag,› and in innumerable beautiful lines scattered throughout his work, appears a genuine inspiration.

In his own day, Drake filled a place which his death left forever vacant. His rare and winning personality, his generous friendships, his joy in life, and his courage in the contemplation of his inevitable fate, still appeal to a generation to whom they are but traditions. The exquisite monody in which Halleck celebrated his loss, links their names and decorates their friendship with imperishable garlands.

A WINTER'S TALE

From ‹The Croakers›

«*A merry heart goes all the way,*
A sad one tires in a mile-a.»
—WINTER'S TALE.

THE man who frets at worldly strife
Grows sallow, sour, and thin;
Give us the lad whose happy life
Is one perpetual grin:
He, Midas-like, turns all to gold;
He smiles when others sigh;
Enjoys alike the hot and cold,
And laughs through wet and dry.

There's fun in everything we meet;
The greatest, worst, and best
Existence is a merry treat,
And every speech a jest:
Be 't ours to watch the crowds that pass
Where mirth's gay banner waves;
To show fools through a quizzing glass,
And bastinade the knaves.

The serious world will scold and ban,
In clamor loud and hard,
To hear Meigs* called a Congressman,
And Paulding called a bard:
But come what may, the man's in luck
Who turns it all to glee,
And laughing, cries with honest Puck,
«Good Lord! what fools ye be!»

---

*Henry Meigs of New York, a Congressman from 1819 to 1821 in the Sixteenth Congress.

THE CULPRIT FAY

My visual orbs are purged from film, and lo!
   Instead of Anster's turnip-bearing vales,
I see old Fairyland's miraculous show!
   Her trees of tinsel kissed by freakish gales,
Her ouphs that, cloaked in leaf-gold, skim the breeze,
   And fairies, swarming. . . . .
— TENNANT'S ‹ANSTER FAIR›

'Tis the middle watch of a summer's night—
      The earth is dark, but the heavens are bright;
      Naught is seen in the vault on high
But the moon, and the stars, and the cloudless sky,
And the flood which rolls its milky hue,
A river of light on the welkin blue.
The moon looks down on old Cronest;
She mellows the shades on his shaggy breast,
And seems his huge gray form to throw
In a silver cone on the wave below;
His sides are broken by spots of shade,
By the walnut bough and the cedar made,
And through their clustering branches dark
Glimmers and dies the firefly's spark—
Like starry twinkles that momently break
Through the rifts of the gathering tempest's rack.

The stars are on the moving stream,
   And fling, as its ripples gently flow,
A burnished length of wavy beam
   In an eel-like, spiral line below;
The winds are whist, and the owl is still;
   The bat in the shelvy rock is hid;
And naught is heard on the lonely hill
But the cricket's chirp, and the answer shrill
      Of the gauze-winged katydid;
And the plaint of the wailing whippoorwill,
Who moans unseen, and ceaseless sings,
   Ever a note of wail and woe,
Till morning spreads her rosy wings,
   And earth and sky in her glances glow.

'Tis the hour of fairy ban and spell:
The wood-tick has kept the minutes well;

He has counted them all with click and stroke
Deep in the heart of the mountain oak,
And he has awakened the sentry elve
   Who sleeps with him in the haunted tree,
To bid him ring the hour of twelve,
   And call the fays to their revelry;
Twelve small strokes on his tinkling bell—
('Twas made of the white snail's pearly shell)
«Midnight comes, and all is well!
Hither, hither, wing your way!
'Tis the dawn of the fairy day.»

They come from beds of lichen green,
They creep from the mullein's velvet screen;
Some on the backs of beetles fly
   From the silver tops of moon-touched trees,
Where they swung in their cobweb hammocks high,
   And rocked about in the evening breeze;
Some from the hum-bird's downy nest—
   They had driven him out by elfin power,
And pillowed on plumes of his rainbow breast,
   Had slumbered there till the charmèd hour;
Some had lain in the scoop of the rock,
   With glittering ising-stars inlaid;
And some had opened the four-o'clock,
   And stole within its purple shade.
And now they throng the moonlight glade,
   Above, below, on every side,
Their little minim forms arrayed
   In the tricksy pomp of fairy pride!

They come not now to print the lea,
In freak and dance around the tree,
Or at the mushroom board to sup,
And drink the dew from the buttercup;—
A scene of sorrow waits them now,
For an ouphe has broken his vestal vow;
He has loved an earthly maid,
And left for her his woodland shade;
He has lain upon her lip of dew,
And sunned him in her eye of blue,
Fanned her cheek with his wing of air,
Played in the ringlets of her hair,
And nestling on her snowy breast,
Forgot the lily-king's behest.

For this the shadowy tribes of air
  To the elfin court must haste away:
And now they stand expectant there,
  To hear the doom of the culprit fay.

The throne was reared upon the grass,
Of spice-wood and of sassafras;
On pillars of mottled tortoise-shell
  Hung the burnished canopy—
And o'er it gorgeous curtains fell
  Of the tulip's crimson drapery.
The monarch sat on his judgment seat;
  On his brow the crown imperial shone;
The prisoner fay was at his feet,
  And his peers were ranged around the throne.
He waved his sceptre in the air,
  He looked around and calmly spoke;
His brow was grave and his eye severe,
  But his voice in a softened accent broke:—

"Fairy! Fairy! list and mark:
  Thou hast broke thine elfin chain;
Thy flame-wood lamp is quenched and dark,
  And thy wings are dyed with a deadly stain—
Thou hast sullied thine elfin purity
  In the glance of a mortal maiden's eye;
Thou hast scorned our dread decree,
  And thou shouldst pay the forfeit high.
But well I know her sinless mind
  Is pure as the angel forms above,
Gentle and meek, and chaste and kind,
  Such as a spirit well might love;
Fairy! had she spot or taint,
Bitter had been thy punishment:
Tied to the hornet's shardy wings;
Tossed on the pricks of nettles' stings;
Or seven long ages doomed to dwell
With the lazy worm in the walnut-shell;
Or every night to writhe and bleed
Beneath the tread of the centipede;
Or bound in a cobweb dungeon dim,
Your jailer a spider, huge and grim,
Amid the carrion bodies to lie
Of the worm, and the bug, and the murdered fly:

These it had been your lot to bear,
Had a stain been found on the earthly fair.
Now list, and mark our mild decree—
Fairy, this your doom must be:—

«Thou shalt seek the beach of sand
Where the water bounds the elfin land;
Thou shalt watch the oozy brine
Till the sturgeon leaps in the bright moonshine,
Then dart the glistening arch below,
And catch a drop from his silver bow.
The water-sprites will wield their arms
  And dash around, with roar and rave,
And vain are the woodland spirits' charms;
  They are the imps that rule the wave.
Yet trust thee in thy single might:
If thy heart be pure and thy spirit right,
Thou shalt win the warlock fight.

«If the spray-bead gem be won,
  The stain of thy wing is washed away;
But another errand must be done
  Ere thy crime be lost for aye:
Thy flame-wood lamp is quenched and dark,—
Thou must re-illume its spark.
Mount thy steed and spur him high
To the heaven's blue canopy;
And when thou seest a shooting star,
Follow it fast, and follow it far—
The last faint spark of its burning train
Shall light the elfin lamp again.
Thou hast heard our sentence, fay;
Hence! to the water-side, away!»

The goblin marked his monarch well;
  He spake not, but he bowed him low,
Then plucked a crimson colen-bell,
  And turned him round in act to go.
The way is long; he cannot fly;
  His soilèd wing has lost its power,
And he winds adown the mountain high
  For many a sore and weary hour.
Through dreary beds of tangled fern,
Through groves of nightshade dark and dern,

Over the grass and through the brake,
Where toils the ant and sleeps the snake;
Now o'er the violet's azure flush
  He skips along in lightsome mood;
And now he thrids the bramble-bush,
  Till its points are dyed in fairy blood.
He has leaped the bog, he has pierced the brier,
He has swum the brook and waded the mire,
Till his spirits sank and his limbs grew weak,
And the red waxed fainter in his cheek.
He had fallen to the ground outright,
  For rugged and dim was his onward track,
But there came a spotted toad in sight,
  And he laughed as he jumped upon her back:
He bridled her mouth with a silkweed twist,
  He lashed her sides with an osier thong.
And now, through evening's dewy mist,
  With leap and spring they bound along,
Till the mountain's magic verge is past,
And the beach of sand is reached at last.

. . . .

Up, fairy! quit thy chickweed bower,
The cricket has called the second hour;
Twice again, and the lark will rise
To kiss the streaking of the skies—
Up! thy charmèd armor don;
Thou'lt need it ere the night be gone.

He put his acorn helmet on:
It was plumed of the silk of the thistle-down;
The corselet plate that guarded his breast
Was once the wild bee's golden vest;
His cloak, of a thousand mingled dyes,
Was formed of the wings of butterflies;
His shield was the shell of a lady-bug queen,
Studs of gold on a ground of green;
And the quivering lance which he brandished bright
Was the sting of a wasp he had slain in fight.
Swift he bestrode his firefly steed;
  He bared his blade of the bent-grass blue;
He drove his spurs of the cockle-seed,
  And away like a glance of thought he flew,
To skim the heavens, and follow far
The fiery trail of the rocket-star.

The moth-fly, as he shot in air,
Crept under the leaf and hid her there;
The katydid forgot its lay,
The prowling gnat fled fast away,
The fell mosquito checked his drone
And folded his wings till the fay was gone,
And the wily beetle dropped his head,
And fell on the ground as if he were dead;
They crouched them close in the darksome shade,
  They quaked all o'er with awe and fear,
For they had felt the blue-bent blade,
  And writhed at the prick of the elfin spear;
Many a time, on a summer's night,
When the sky was clear, and the moon was bright,
They had been roused from the haunted ground
By the yelp and bay of the fairy hound;
They had heard the tiny bugle-horn,
  They had heard the twang of the maize-silk string,
When the vine-twig bows were tightly drawn,
And the needle-shaft through air was borne,
  Feathered with down of the hum-bird's wing.
And now they deemed the courier ouphe
  Some hunter-sprite of the elfin ground;
And they watched till they saw him mount the roof
  That canopies the world around;
Then glad they left their covert lair,
And freaked about in the midnight air.

Up to the vaulted firmament
His path the firefly courser bent,
And at every gallop on the wind,
He flung a glittering spark behind;
He flies like a feather in the blast
Till the first light cloud in heaven is past.
 But the shapes of air have begun their work,
And a drizzly mist is round him cast;
  He cannot see through the mantle murk;
He shivers with cold, but he urges fast;
  Through storm and darkness, sleet and shade,
He lashes his steed, and spurs amain—
For shadowy hands have twitched the rein,
  And flame-shot tongues around him played,
And near him many a fiendish eye
Glared with a fell malignity,

And yells of rage, and shrieks of fear,
Came screaming on his startled ear.

His wings are wet around his breast,
The plume hangs dripping from his crest,
His eyes are blurred with the lightning's glare,
And his ears are stunned with the thunder's blare.
But he gave a shout, and his blade he drew;
   He thrust before and he struck behind,
Till he pierced their cloudy bodies through,
   And gashed their shadowy limbs of wind;
Howling the misty spectres flew;
   They rend the air with frightful cries;
For he has gained the welkin blue,
   And the land of clouds beneath him lies.

Up to the cope careering swift,
   In breathless motion fast,
Fleet as the swallow cuts the drift,
   Or the sea-roc rides the blast,
The sapphire sheet of eve is shot,
   The spherèd moon is past,
The earth but seems a tiny blot
   On a sheet of azure cast.
Oh! it was sweet, in the clear moonlight,
   To tread the starry plain of even!
To meet the thousand eyes of night,
   And feel the cooling breath of heaven!
But the elfin made no stop or stay
Till he came to the bank of the Milky Way;
Then he checked his courser's foot,
And watched for the glimpse of the planet-shoot.

Sudden along the snowy tide
   That swelled to meet their footsteps' fall,
The sylphs of heaven were seen to glide,
   Attired in sunset's crimson pall;
Around the fay they weave the dance,
   They skip before him on the plain,
And one has taken his wasp-sting lance,
   And one upholds his bridle rein;
With warblings wild they lead him on
   To where, through clouds of amber seen,
Studded with stars, resplendent shone
   The palace of the sylphid queen.

Its spiral columns, gleaming bright,
Were streamers of the northern light;
Its curtain's light and lovely flush
Was of the morning's rosy blush;
And the ceiling fair that rose aboon,
The white and feathery fleece of noon.

. . . .

Borne afar on the wings of the blast,
Northward away he speeds him fast,
And his courser follows the cloudy wain
Till the hoof-strokes fall like pattering rain.
The clouds roll backward as he flies,
Each flickering star behind him lies,
And he has reached the northern plain,
And backed his firefly steed again,
Ready to follow in its flight
The streaming of the rocket-light.

The star is yet in the vault of heaven,
   But it rocks in the summer gale;
And now 'tis fitful and uneven,
   And now 'tis deadly pale;
And now 'tis wrapped in sulphur-smoke,
   And quenched is its rayless beam;
And now with a rattling thunder-stroke
   It bursts in flash and flame.
As swift as the glance of the arrowy lance
   That the storm spirit flings from high,
The star-shot flew o'er the welkin blue,
   As it fell from the sheeted sky.
As swift as the wind in its train behind
   The elfin gallops along:
The fiends of the clouds are bellowing loud,
   But the sylphid charm is strong;
He gallops unhurt in the shower of fire,
   While the cloud-fiends fly from the blaze;
He watches each flake till its sparks expire,
   And rides in the light of its rays.

But he drove his steed to the lightning's speed,
   And caught a glimmering spark;
Then wheeled around to the fairy ground,
   And sped through the midnight dark.

. . . .

Ouphe and goblin! imp and sprite!
  Elf of eve! and starry fay!
Ye that love the moon's soft light,
  Hither, hither, wend your way;
Twine ye in a jocund ring,
  Sing and trip it merrily,
Hand to hand, and wing to wing,
  Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

Hail the wanderer again
  With dance and song, and lute and lyre;
Pure his wing and strong his chain,
  And doubly bright his fairy fire.
Twine ye in an airy round,
  Brush the dew and print the lea;
Skip and gambol, hop and bound,
  Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

The beetle guards our holy ground,
  He flies about the haunted place,
And if mortal there be found,
  He hums in his ears and flaps his face;
The leaf-harp sounds our roundelay,
  The owlet's eyes our lanterns be;
Thus we sing and dance and play,
  Round the wild witch-hazel tree.

But hark! from tower on tree-top high,
  The sentry elf his call has made;
A streak is in the eastern sky;
  Shapes of moonlight! flit and fade!
The hill-tops gleam in Morning's spring,
The skylark shakes his dappled wing,
The day-glimpse glimmers on the lawn,—
The cock has crowed, and the fays are gone.

THE AMERICAN FLAG

When Freedom from her mountain height
Unfurled her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there;
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then from his mansion in the sun
She called her eagle-bearer down,
And gave unto his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud!
Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,
To hear the tempest-trumpings loud,
And see the lightning lances driven,
When strive the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven —
Child of the sun! to thee 'tis given
To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur-smoke,
To ward away the battle-stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory!

Flag of the brave! thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high,
When speaks the signal trumpet-tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on:
Ere yet the life-blood, warm and wet,
Has dimmed the glistening bayonet,
Each soldier eye shall brightly turn
To where the sky-born glories burn,
And as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance;
And when the cannon-mouthings loud
Heave in wild wreaths the battle-shroud,
And gory sabres rise and fall,
Like shoots of flame on midnight's pall; —

Then shall thy meteor-glances glow,
And cowering foes shall sink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death.

Flag of the seas! on ocean wave
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave;
When death, careering on the gale,
Sweeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frighted waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's reeling rack,
Each dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look at once to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's hope and home!
By angel hands to valor given;
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven.
Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us!

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